Erap withdrawal of $3M alarms gov't

STORY BELOW, COLUMN 3

Estrada: Gloria only 'acting president'

BY JULIET L. JAVELLANA, DONNA S. CUETO AND MARTIN P. MARFIL

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo was sworn into office Saturday, but her ousted predecessor and his allies appear unprepared to concede.

The Senate yesterday took notice of a Jan. 20 letter by Joseph Estrada stating that he was only

ESTRADA/ A12

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
TUESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2001 ★★ 26 PAGES 3 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 46 ₱15

30

JV: Please stop persecuting family

BY CATHY C. YAMSUAN AND AGNES E. DONATO

"PLEASE stop persecuting my family. We are already down. Do they really have to kick us?"

JV Ejercito, son of ousted President Joseph Estrada, made the emotional appeal as he noted the growing clamor that criminal charges be

JV/ A4

Estrada foes dominate new Cabinet

FIRST day at the Palace, President Macapagal-Arroyo now literally occupies the seat of power.
VAL HANDUMON

Coup talk rife but Enrile son assures Gloria

BY CARLITO PABLO AND ARMAND N. NOCUM

TANKS, armored fighting vehicles and storm troopers remain deployed inside Camp Aguinaldo as rumors of a counter-coup to be led by Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile and other supporters of deposed President Joseph Estrada flew fast on the first day in office of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"We're still on red alert," the camp commander, Col. Angel Atutubo said although he declined to say where possible threats might come from.

Amid the coup rumors, Cagayan Rep. Jackie Enrile, a son of the senator, yesterday met with Ms Macapagal to assure her that his father or the senator's influential friends in the military would not cause her trouble.

The congressman said he assured the new President that there was no truth to reports that a coup was in the offing.

"I gave her the assurance that she will not get any threat from us," the young Enrile said.

"But I told her that rumors are rife that there may be a coup plot right now. I want to assure the public that there is no such thing," he told Malacañang reporters after emerging from a meeting with Ms Macapagal.

He admitted that his father did meet with Sen. Gregorio Honasan recently. But he said his father and Honasan, a former Army colonel who led several coup attempts against the Aquino administration, never talked about a coup.

"I believe Senator Honasan loves this country and I don't believe that he will do anything to harm this country as it stands right now," he said.

COUP/ A12

BY ARMAND N. NOCUM

KEY SUPPORTERS of the four-day People Power II that ousted President Joseph Estrada were appointed yesterday to the Cabinet of newly installed President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Former Defense Secretary Renato de Villa, who negotiated with generals to support the people's uprising, is the new executive secretary.

Sen. Raul Roco, one of the 10 senators in the impeachment trial who voted for the opening of an envelope containing damning evidence against Estrada, is education secretary.

Former Batangas Rep. Hernando Perez, a private prosecutor in the impeachment trial, is justice secretary.

Laguna Gov. Joey Lina, the first governor to break away from Estrada, is interior secretary.

Vicky Garchitorena, a convenor of the Kongreso ng Mamamayang Pilipino (Kompil) II that spearheaded a civil disobedience against Estrada, is head of the Presidential Management Staff.

Emilia Boncodin, who teaches at the UP College of Public Administration and Governance, is budget secretary.

Renato Corona, Ms Macapagal's acting spokesperson, is chief of staff.

Paul Dominguez, a Mindanao businessman, is presidential assistant for regional development.

Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado, who defected to the opposition at the 11th hour, was allowed to retain his post until he runs for an elective post in the May 14 elections.

The President also allowed Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Angelo Reyes, who is scheduled to retire on March 13, to stay in his post. His term may even be extended by one year.

The withdrawal of support for Estrada by Mercado and Reyes on Friday was a crucial turning point that led to Estrada's downfall.

Gen. Eduardo Ermita, a former congressman, is presidential adviser on national security.

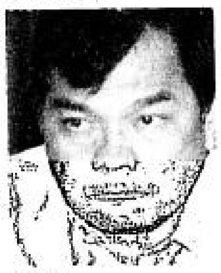
Corona said former President Fidel Ramos, also among the protest leaders, could be designated as a roving ambassador of goodwill, a post that would

ESTRADA FOES/ A12

ROCO
Education

DE VILLA
Executive Secretary

PEREZ
Justice

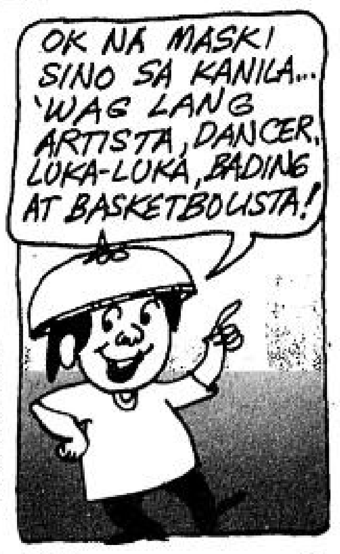


LINA
DILG

GARCHITORENA
PMS

ERMITA
Nat'l Security

Names of other appointees on Page A12



OK NA MASKI SINO SA KANILA... 'WAG LANG ARTISTA, DANCER, LUKA-LUKA, BADING AT BASKETBOLISTA!

Veep search sparks regionalism

BY THE PDI BUREAUS

THE LINES are drawn, at least to people in the provinces who are rooting for their hometown heroes in the selection of the next Vice President.

In Mindanao, the top choice is Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. Ilonggos and Antiqueños are pushing for Sen. Franklin Drilon, while Bicolanos want Sen. Raul Roco.

VEEP/ A12

Nostalgia at Palace: GMA's first day at work

BY ARMAND NOCUM AND NORMAN BORDADORA

NOSTALGIA defined her first day in Malacañang, where she lived as the daughter of President Diosdado Macapagal 35 years ago.

Just like her father, President Macapagal-Arroyo vowed to bring back respectability to public service.

According to Ms Macapagal, her father imbued in her a deep respect for the bureaucracy, she said during the 8 a.m. flag ceremony yesterday at the Palace.

In the afternoon, the President again referred to her father during a thanksgiving Mass concelebrated

NOSTALGIA/ A4

Erap withdrawal of $3M alarms gov't

BY DONNA S. CUETO AND MICHAEL LIM UBAC

ONLY People Power can possibly stop the reported withdrawal today by former President Joseph Estrada of $3 million and P100 million from his account in the Citibank branch in Virra Mall, Greenhills.

The INQUIRER learned that there was an attempt to withdraw the amount yesterday but some Citibank employees had alerted officials of the Macapagal administration.

Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo had immediately ordered the officer-in-charge of the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), Lita Aguirre, to sign the freeze order.

But Aguirre, formerly the deputy BIR commisioner, was constrained by legal requirements before she could sign a freeze order. One, she needs a written order from the Palace, and two, a written official appointment as the OIC of the BIR.

Even Romulo has yet to be officially sworn into office.

In the Philippine legal system, aside from the courts, only the BIR commissioner can issue a

ERAP/ A12

WITH "childlike meekness, I will do better" the new President vows as Cardinal Sin beams after saying a thanksgiving Mass at the Manila Cathedral.
VAL HANDUMON

Happy days back at Philippine stock market

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO AND CLARISSA S. BATINO

LOCAL stocks yesterday rocketed more than 17 percent as investors cheered the peaceful transfer of power to Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo from ousted President Joseph Ejercito Estrada.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index rallied by as much as 500.7 points, an intra-day record of 34 percent, in the first few minutes of trading but closed just 255.13 points up to 1,708.6.

"This is the moment we've all been waiting for and now is the time to buy. This is euphoria," said Astro del Castillo, head stock analyst of A & A Securities.

"Gone is the single biggest factor weighing down on business confidence. The market can now look forward to a fresh start," AB Capital Securities trader Marlon Caisip added.

Total turnover at the exchange shot up to a record P7.15 billion as President Macapagal-Arroyo moved to Malacañang, named her Cabinet and revived peace talks with communist and Moro rebels.

One analyst said foreign investors might have accounted for P4 billion worth of trades.

For its part, the peso opened higher at 46 to the dollar at the Philippine Dealing System but closed lower at 49.30 due to pent-up corporate demand for dollars.

When the military withdrew its support from Estrada on Friday, the peso surged to 47.50 to the dollar after plunging to a record low of

HAPPY/ A4

ALL OUT
PEACE NA!

Gloria revives talks with rebs

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo ordered officials yesterday to restart separate peace talks with communist and Moro rebels, Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado said.

"She has given us specific instructions as commander-in-chief and those instructions are basically in the area of restarting the negotiation process," Mercado said after meeting with Ms Macapagal, president for barely 48 hours at the time.

The administration of deposed President Joseph Estrada had held talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, a large rebel group fighting for a separate Islamic nation in Mindanao and the Communist Party of the Philippines-National Democratic Front, who are fighting nationwide, but the negotiations collapsed.

MILF guerrillas welcomed Ms Macapagal's order, saying they were optimistic they could reach a political settlement of their uprising with the new administration.

"We welcome this development. I hope this will be realized the soonest possible time," Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesperson, told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

"The holding of peace talks is not a hopeless case," Kabalu added.

Ms Macapagal had recently told Radio Station dxMS that once elevated to the top post, she would restructure the government's peace process with the MILF.

"I will not only order the resumption (of the talks) but a restructuring so that both sides would come to an agreement to end the sufferings of millions of Muslims there," she said.

Kabalu said the MILF peace panel was "still intact."

The MILF disbanded its peace panel on Aug. 19, claiming the atmosphere was no longer conducive for the resumption of talks.

The government at that time filed charges against top MILF leaders and in fact offered a bounty for the capture of MILF chair Salamat Hashim, vice chair for military affairs Al Haj Murad and spokesperson Kabalu.

Kabalu said MILF negotiators would sit down with "whoever sits (in the governemnt peace panel), as long as he or she can help solve the problem."

Kabalu urged Ms Macapagal, as a sign of goodwill, to withdraw an "all-out war" policy adopted by Estrada, which led to major battles between rebels and government troops in Mindanao.

The communists had no immediate reaction to Ms Macapagal's order for new talks.

Communist rebels called off separate talks with the Estrada administration in 1999 to protest the Senate's approval of the Visiting Forces Agreement, which allowed the resumption of large-scale joint Philippine-United States military exercises in the country.

Despite seeking peace, the President still appeared ready to deal with the rebels sternly. Mercado said the new President also ordered him to speed up a program modernizing the country's Armed Forces, one of Asia's most ill-equipped.

The program has been stalled by a lack of funds.

The twin insurgencies have posed major obstacles to Philippine progress and are among the country's top security concerns. Police blamed the MILF for five simultaneous bomb attacks that killed 18 people and injured more than 120 on Dec. 30. *AP and Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Coco levy EO may be rescinded

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE NEW Macapagal administration has moved to dismantle policies of the previous government which are seen to favor cronies of ousted President Joseph Estrada, as well as pursue court cases against friends of the deposed leader.

Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo said he has asked Malacañang to revoke an Estrada executive order approving a compromise deal on sequestered San Miguel Corp. shares equivalent to 27 percent of the food and beverage conglomerate.

The compromise would effectively lift the sequestration on the shares, bought with funds collected from coconut farmers, and allow the government to sell the bloc to fund a trust fund and development program for coconut farmers.

The deal was perceived as favorable to businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, a friend and benefactor of Estrada.

Romulo said that in line with the planned tax collection program, the government would pursue tax-evasion cases filed against beer and tobacco tycoon Lucio Tan and his company, Fortune Tobacco Corp for allegedly evading taxes totaling P25.27 billion.

He said cases against other Estrada cronies would be pursued even as he stressed that the new administration "is not after personalities."

"We will follow the law," he said.

Cojuangco and Tan were two of the biggest contributors to Estrada's presidential campaign in 1998.

EO 313, which Estrada signed on Dec. 8, sought to create a P50-billion trust fund for the coconut industry out of the proceeds of the coconut levy funds. The money for the trust fund would be obtained from that portion of the levy funds lodged in 27 percent of sequestered San Miguel Corp. shares whose ownership is being disputed by small coconut farmers one hand and Cojuangco and his coconut traders associates on the other.

The earnings from the trust fund was to be split by the two groups.

Romulo recommended that an executive order of former President Fidel Ramos declaring the coconut levy funds as public should be revived. According to the provisions of the Ramos EO, any proceeds from the levy would flow back to coconut farmers. Cojuangco and his associates were not seen to benefit from it.

"It's my recommendation to the Cabinet to revoke Estrada's EO. If it's public funds, then it should flow back to the public and go back to the farmers," said Romulo.

The Sandiganbayan anti-graft court had sequestered about 47 percent of San Miguel Corp. shares on charges that these had been bought using P9.6 billion in coconut levy funds collected from coconut farmers by Cojuangco who had been appointed administrator of the levy by the dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

US exec visits Gloria

A TOP US State Department official called on President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday to reiterate Washington's support for her new administration.

Assistant Secretary for East Asia and Pacific Affairs Ralph Boyce met with Ms Macapagal at Malacañang at 3 p.m., according to Acting Foreign Affairs Secretary Lauro Baja Jr.

Baja, who was present at the meeting, said Boyce discussed political, economic and trade relations between the US and the Philippines. He declined to elaborate, however.

The US was among the first foreign governments to recognize the presidency of Ms. Macapagal.

Immediately after she was sworn into office Jan. 20, the US Embassy in Manila issued a statement congratulating the Philippines for the peaceful transfer of power.

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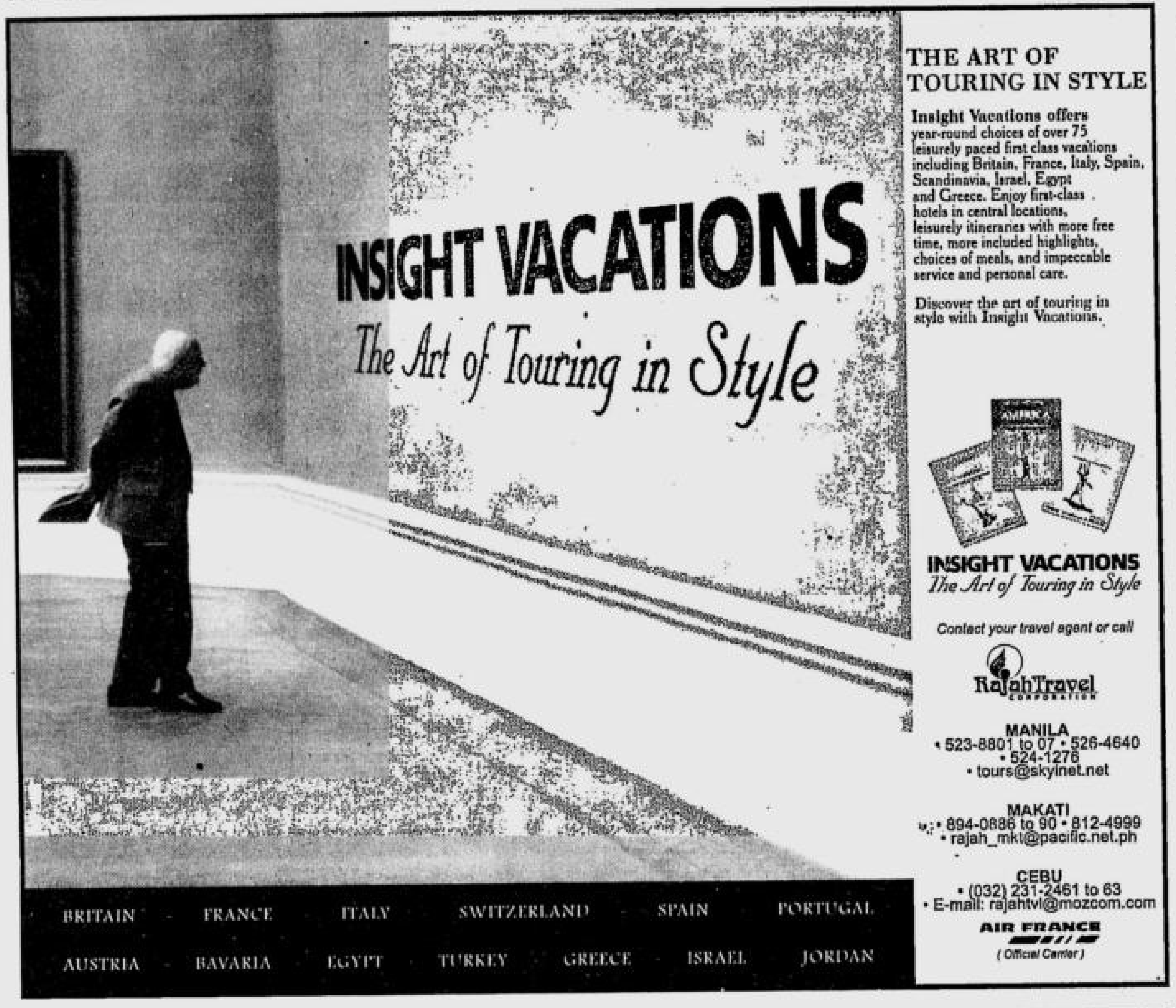

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KURATONG RUBOUT CASE

New witnesses vs Ping surface

THE PHILIPPINE National Police will revive the Kuratong Baleleng rubout case against former PNP director general Panfilo "Ping" Lacson after 10 new witnesses surfaced to testify against him and his men.

This developed as the Acting PNP Chief Deputy Director General Leandro Mendoza recommended to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo that the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force, which he described a "camp within the camp," be disbanded to pave the way for "one PNP."

As he assumed office as the 14th PNP chief, Mendoza also promoted and inducted 14 police officers to chief superintendents or police brigadier generals. They previously held the position of directors of national support units, police district directors and deputies in the directorial staff.

Mendoza also recalled the police officers who were "dismissed" by Lacson last year for allegedly being "ICUs (inept, corrupt and undisciplined)."

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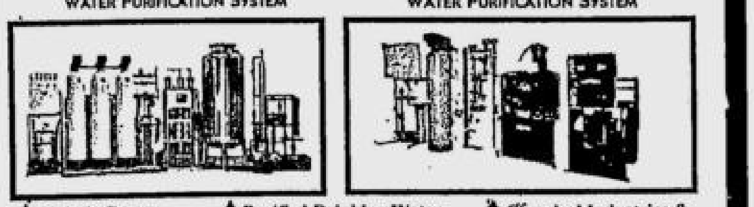

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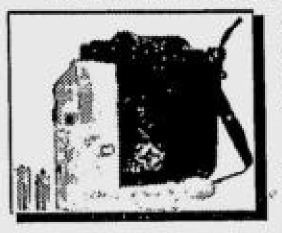
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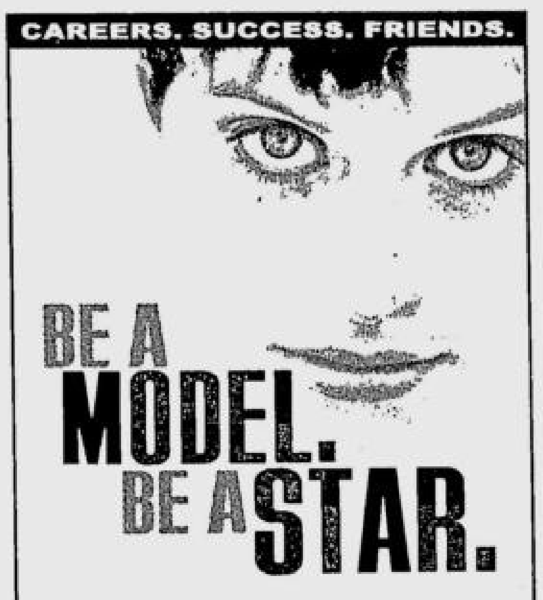
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Lee belittles Edsa 2: 'I don't think it's democratic'

SINGAPORE—The change of power in the Philippines was no boost for democracy because it was done outside the Constitution but the Southeast Asian country can still expect investments to flow back "cautiously," Singapore elder statesman Lee Kuan Yew said Monday.

"I think there's an immediate sense of relief so capital will flow back but cautiously because the problems are not over," Lee said in an interview with the Associated Press.

Former President Joseph Estrada was forced from office on Saturday, days after an impeachment trial against him collapsed.

Hundreds of thousands of Filipinos demonstrated in the streets when 11 of 21 senators voted to seal bank records that Estrada opponents said would prove wrongdoing. The Army then withdrew its support from Estrada and the Supreme Court named Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, a 53-year-old US-educated economist, as president.

"I would have preferred that Estrada could be removed in a constitutional way in the Senate," said Lee, the 77-year-old founder of the modern city-state of Singapore whose views are often consulted by world leaders.

"The fact that he was able to get 11 out of 21 (senators) forced it out into the streets and . . . the Supreme Court declared the presidency vacant. That's an assumption of power here which isn't in the Constitution. So I don't think it was a plus for the democratic system," he added.

Lee resigned as Singapore's prime minister a decade ago but he still wields considerable power under the title of senior minister.

Though credited with turning a malaria-ridden, poverty-stricken tropical island into one of Asia's most prosperous nations, Lee has himself often been criticized for not having much taste for democracy.

Elections are regularly held in Singapore, but critics say there is little freedom of expression and that opposition voices have little chance to be heard. Many Singaporeans feel that supporting opposition parties could cost them their standing in jobs or in school.

But Lee said Monday that Singapore's 3.2 million people were now reaching a level of development that should allow the government to "ease up."

"We are a literate population now. I'm not saying that we are with a large middle class but it's becoming one," Lee said. "So we can afford to ease up but I do not believe in a big bang. I think we'll go step by step, stage by state."

"You can see there's a much more relaxed attitude to contrary opinions in the media, in the opposition. They can say what they like provided they don't touch on language and religion because that will stir things up," he said, referring to Singapore's multiracial society, which is more than three-quarters Chinese.

Lee said raising living standards in a poor country requires governments that are willing to take unpopular measures. Western values are not a panacea, he said.

"If we had followed the prescriptions of the Western liberals we would never have got here," he said. "From A to B, from Third World to first, there are many pitfalls," said Lee, who recently released the second volume of his memoirs titled "From Third World to First: The Singapore Story." ***AP***

Nostalgia at Palace . . .

(From page A1)

by Cardinals Sin and Vidal at the Manila Cathedral.

"Every time there would be difficulty, (Sin) would always say something that paraphrased what my father used to say. Do what is best and God will do the rest," said the President in her impromptu remarks after Mass.

"Your father must be beaming in heaven, proudly telling God that you are his daughter," Sin told the President.

For sentimental reasons, Ms Macapagal has also decided to live at the main Palace, presidential spokesperson Renato Corona said.

Ms Macapagal is the only President to live at the main house of the Palace since Ferdinand Marcos. Former Presidents Corazon Aquino and Fidel Ramos opted to stay at the nearby Arlegui mansion.

Ex-President Joseph Estrada lived at the Presidential Residence.

"I would like to live in the old place where we used to live," Corona quoted the President as saying.

The old place she was referring to is located on the second floor of the Palace. It has several main rooms and four bedrooms.

Corona said part of the second floor would be converted into a "residence."

He was quick to add that the refurbishing of the area will not cost much because the bedrooms only need beds and cabinets.

In her first meeting with Malacañang officials and personnel in the Palace, Ms Macapagal also said that she wanted to leave a legacy as a "good President."

"I feel humbled and indeed after all, I am not an ambitious person. I have no grandiose dreams to become a great President. But I want to be a good President. Help me be a good President."

She also asked the help of Sin. "I thank Cardinal Sin for his promise to help me. I need your help, archbishops and bishops. I need your help, my brothers and sisters," Ms Macapagal said at the Mass attended by Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Antonio Franco, Catholic Bishops Conference president, Archbishop Orlando Quevedo, and former President Cory Aquino.

"I call on all citizens, I call on the bureaucracy, I call on those working here in this historic Palace, let us all be one. Let us be united, let us heal, let us build," she said after the flag ceremony in a wildly applauded speech delivered on the grounds fronting Kalayaan Hall.

Wearing a brown suit, the new President said she was aware how millions of people were expecting no less than a more effective governance from her administration.

"As you all know, the path that brought me here today has not been an easy one, and it is not yet an easy one. And I did not take that path alone," she said in her prepared speech.

"With childlike meekness, I will listen and try to do better," she told the congregation at the Manila Cathedral.

She promised that she would listen to the Catholic hierarchy's criticisms and remain an "obedient and faithful" daughter of the Church for the good of the nation.

She also thanked the Catholic bishops, who, in their respective archdioceses and dioceses, urged the people to gather in protest and ask for the resignation of the former President.

"At Edsa, God showed us that we are a chosen people. Edsa is no longer just a geographic place. It is an idea. (After what the bishops did in their respective areas around the country), there is an Edsa in every diocese," Ms Macapagal said.

Again, she also prayed for peace and unity, as well for the "rebuilding of our nation and the reviving of our economy."

"A house divided will not stand," she said.

She noted the miraculous recovery of the stock and money markets, when the country was on the verge of political and economic collapse just barely a week ago. *(Story on Page A1.)*

"We will help you for the good of the nation. We will also criticize you for the good of the nation. In everything that we shall do, may the welfare of the people be served and may the will of God be done in you," Sin told Ms Macapagal in his homily.

Sin reminded the President to always respect the will of the people, "for morality and public office and in private life she will lead us by example."

Happy days back at Philippine stock market

(From page A1)

55.75 at the height of the anti-Estrada protests last week.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura said that "with the early resolution of the political problem," economic growth this year should be up to a percentage point above the original target of 3 to 3.5 percent.

Buenaventura also suggested that monetary authorities could even trim key interest rates "by 50 basis points" to perk up economic activity.

"The economic policies are very fundamentally sound but the problem is our lousy political environment," he said.

New Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo said on Monday he believed the peso would strengthen to around 45 to 47.

The focus of investors, however, was the equities market that nearly collapsed in 1999 in the country's largest stock manipulation scandal involving BW Resources Corp.

Investors stampeded out of the market and daily turnover dwindled to as low as P300 million.

"The market just exploded," Edward Go of Investors Securities Inc. said of Monday's 17-percent rally that eclipsed the previous one-day record rise last Nov. 6.

The main index then rose 16.48 percent after Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II and several senior economic advisers resigned from the Estrada administration. Then Senate President Franklin Drilon and former House Speaker Manuel Villar also quit Estrada's ruling party.

Blue chips, like Meralco, Philippine Long Distance and Telephone Co., Ayala Land Inc. and SM Prime Holdings Inc., led Monday's rally.

On top of the list of 140 gainers, however, were issues associated with anti-Estrada figures.

Ebecom Holdings, owned by the family of former Finance Secretary Edgardo Espiritu, rose 50 percent.

C&P Homes, founded by Las Piñas Rep. Manuel Villar, jumped 48 percent.

Among the 10 losers were issues associated with Estrada's friends, such as Waterfront Philippines Inc. Warrants owned by William Gatchalian and Fairmont Holdings, formerly BW Resources Corp., owned by Dante Tan.

Correction

Even so, analysts warned of a stock market correction in the next few days as foreign investors were expected to pocket profits.

"Dollar-based investors got the benefit of a double whammy with the peso up 12 percent last Friday and the stock market up 17 percent," said Vincent Lazatin, vice president of World Wide Investment Management Co. of the Philippines.

"That's a gain of nearly 30 percent. Who is not going to take profit?" Lazatin said.

Other analysts said the hard economic realities facing the Macapagal administration would soon reassert themselves in the equities market.

"I expect the main index to trade between 1,700 and 1,750 points until there is more direction as to how the new government will approach the financing requirements for the budget deficit," said Joey Cuyegkeng, economist of ING Barings Securities Phils. Inc.

Cuyegkeng said the new administration did not have much time to prove itself. "The investment community will want to see some action (on steps to boost the economy) within three to six months," he said.

Albert Chua, portfolio manger of All Asia Asset Management Co., said foreign interest in selected blue chips would likely continue but added it was premature to think fund managers were ready to reassess their portfolio weightings on the Philippines.

"Foreign funds will come in just to get their feet wet but don't expect them to jump into the pool right now," he said.

Mammoth job

Southeast Asian newspapers and observers also warned that Ms Macapagal had a mammoth job on her hands to restore confidence shattered by the allegations of massive corruption and cronyism leveled against Estrada.

"Her promise to improve moral standards in the government and in society is an important indication of the seriousness which she brings to her job," said the Singapore Straits Times.

"After the deceits and confusions marking the final stretch of the collapsed regime, the Philippines deserves real movement on the problems facing it.

"The time for acting is over; the time for action has arrived," it added, referring to Estrada, a former actor, who rode to political stardom on the back of his popularity playing tough movie heroes.

Other newspapers said Ms Macapagal's family connections and economic credentials would give her a head start.

"President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo will immediately be able to restore the lost teamwork between government, labor and business that used to be a pillar of Philippine public governance," said the Hong Kong iMail newspaper.

But The Bangkok Post warned Ms Macapagal, an economist with "even bigger friends in big business," would be walking a tightrope.

In calling on political heavyweights to organize a "people power" revolt and asking for support from "friends in high places," it was inevitable they would now "want something in return," the newspaper said.

"By taking Mr. Estrada down by citing corruption, it is paramount that she ensures that she and her new government are squeaky clean. And unfortunately for the Philippines, where corruption traditionally has been rife in the corridors of power, her task is a most difficult one." ***With reports from AP, AFP and Reuters***

JV: Please stop persecuting my ,family

(From page A1)

filed against his father.

Ejercito said he would have preferred the impeachment trial to continue so that his father could present evidence that would clear him of corruption and other charges.

"My father would have retired happily after that. He would have stepped down," Ejercito said in a telephone interview.

The former president left his home in North Greenhills, San Juan, yesterday for the first time since he was unceremoniously removed from office on Saturday, a subdivision security guard confirmed.

The guard, who asked not to be named, said Estrada was accompanied by another son, San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada, when he left his Polk Street home between 9:30 and 10:30 a.m.

Mayor Estrada dropped the phone on the INQUIRER, however, when he was asked in an afternoon telephone interview where he and his father had gone that morning.

The speculation was that the two Estradas had gone to the home of Rep. Gualberto Duavit in Rizal to attend a meeting of leaders of the Lapian ng Masang Pilipino (LAMP).

LAMP members reportedly met to discuss their post-Estrada administration stand and the role they would play in the new Macapagal administration.

Estrada's political adviser Lito Banayo was quoted in an unconfirmed report as saying that the former chief executive met with LAMP leaders at Duavit's house to determine whether to continue with their three-party coalition or to take an active opposition role in the two Houses of Congress.

JV Ejercito said his father "could have put up a fight" had he wanted to. He did not elaborate.

Very painful

He asked his father's critics to consider that he left Malacañang "before blood was shed. There is no blood on the hands of our family. It was very painful but we made that sacrifice. *Tapos ganito pa ang gagawin nila* (And, this is how they treat us)?"

President Macapagal-Arroyo has expressed her determination to pursue criminal charges against her predecessor, despite an appeal by representatives of Estrada to grant him immunity from suit.

The request was reportedly made before Estrada, who also reportedly asked to be allowed to keep all his money and mansions, was forced out of Malacañang early Saturday afternoon.

Ejercito, as well as other sources, confirmed that the swift turn of recent events had made his father very depressed.

"He was hurt but at least he talks to visitors now. No one in the family watches television. We also do not read the newspapers. We are already feeling down, what's the use of reading the news," Ejercito said.

Two sources who requested anonymity but who held high positions in the Estrada administration confirmed that the ousted leader had been receiving a steady stream of visitors at his Greenhills home since the night of his ouster.

Ejercito refused to name the visitors. One of the sources said most of the 11 senators who voted not to open the second envelope at Estrada's impeachment trial were at the home on Saturday night.

A second source said it was the turn of businessmen close to Estrada to see him Sunday. Members of Mare, or Mahirap Ang Riwasa ni Erap, the civic group led by former first lady Luisa "Loi" Ejercito, were also there as were their children—Jinggoy and Jackie who was with her husband, Beaver Lopez.

Sunday night's topic of conversation reportedly centered on who were going to be named to the Macapagal Cabinet. "They were also talking about the difficulties (of forming) a new Cabinet," the second source said.

Festive mood

The first source observed that it was "ironic" that a "festive mood" prevailed over the Polk Street residence despite the circumstances of Estrada's homecoming.

He added that Estrada remained "very worried about the criminal charges that will be filed against him."

Ejercito said that despite his father's fall from grace, the family was thankful that "those who love the President" openly showed their support for him until the very end.

"It was very touching when members of the Presidential Security Group and even the Malacañang Press Corps cried when we were leaving. *Kahit paano minahal kami* by those who really know us," Ejercito said.

Also on Sunday night, Greenhills subdivision guards and neighbors confirmed that a party was hosted by Estrada for his former PSG guards. The PSG and police assigned to secure the ex-President and his immediate family denied this, however.

The subdivision guards also refused to identify Estrada's visitors. They reminded reporters that they had standing orders to prevent members of the press from getting near the Estrada residence.

The San Juan police deployed one more patrol car yesterday to the Polk Street home. This was in addition to the two patrol cars and 12 uniformed policemen patrolling the area.

Supt. Eduardo Lorenzo, San Juan police deputy for administration, said he would consider sending additional uniformed personnel to the residence if the former President requested it.

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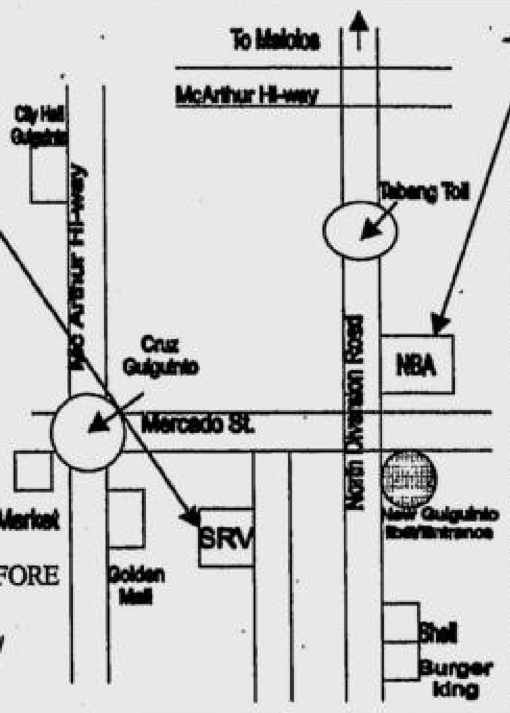

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Davide to reconvene impeachment court

By Juliet L. Javellana

CHIEF Justice Hilario Davide Jr. has ordered the reconvening of the impeachment court so that it will be able to "formally close" the impeachment trial of former President Joseph Estrada.

Senate Secretary Lutgardo Barbo, who served as clerk of court of the impeachment court, said Davide asked that the court convene today or tomorrow to rule on several pending motions and to formally close the proceedings.

Barbo, however, said the court would no longer pass a verdict on the former President's guilt or innocence on the four Articles of Impeachment.

Barbo said Davide would rule on contempt motions against Estrada's friend Jaime Dichaves, defense lawyers Sigfrid and Raymond Fortun, and House prosecutors Raul Gonzalez and Clavel Asas-Martinez.

Barbo said the impeachment court could convene even without the prosecutors, who resigned after 11 senators voted against the opening of a second envelope allegedly containing records of a P3.3 billion account of Estrada.

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. also wanted the resumption of the trial "in order to wind up the proceedings of the impeachment court. It's not good to keep it hanging."

But Senators Franklin Drilon, Loren Legarda-Leviste, Renato Cayetano, Teofisto Guingona Jr. and Juan Flavier said there was no need to reconvene because the purpose of the impeachment trial—which was to remove the respondent President—had been achieved.

Meanwhile, Estrada's lawyer, Estelito Mendoza, yesterday debunked reports that he had fled the country last Jan. 19 to escape the growing wrath against Estrada that eventually led to his ouster.

In a press statement, Mendoza took exception to "insinuations" that he fled for Hong Kong last Friday. His office said he returned to the country yesterday.

"My trip to Hong Kong was planned and arranged immediately after the impeachment court adjourned on Wednesday," he said. *With a report from Rocky Nazareno*

DFA dashes Miriam's bid

By D. Pazzibugan

THE FOREIGN affairs department yesterday dashed Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago's hopes of sitting as a judge at an international court set up by the United Nations to try war crimes in the former Yugoslavia.

Santiago had written the Department of Foreign Affairs in December soon after the impeachment trial of Estrada began, expressing her interest in becoming one of the 14 judges of the UN International Tribunal.

Yesterday, however, Acting Foreign Secretary Lauro Baja Jr. said the department was "rethinking" its recommendation of Santiago because the UN had moved forward the selection date for the 14 judges.

Ancheta, ex-BIR chief, dies

LAWYER Ruben B. Ancheta, former commissioner of internal revenue, died after a lingering illness at the Makati Medical Center yesterday morning. He was 61.

Ancheta was BIR commissioner from 1979 to 1986.

A native of Laoag, Ilocos Norte, Ancheta is survived by his wife, Lolita Agustin, also of Laoag; children Allan and Vicky Launchenco; Maita, Crissy and Bobby. His remains lie at the Sanctuario de San Antonio on McKinley Road in Forbes Park, Makati.

A graduate of UP, Ancheta was the chairman of the editorial board, Philippine Law Registrar, 1959-60; gold medalist, Annual UP Law Debate, 1959; member of the UP Law Honor Society; Editor, Notes and Comments, Philippine Law Journal; and president of the UP Law Alumni Association.

Comelec exec's powers clipped

By Gerald Lacuarta

COMMISSION on Elections Chair Harriet Demetriou has clipped the powers of Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco by removing her as commissioner-in-charge of the poll body's modernization committee.

Commissioner Mehol Sadain was appointed to replace Tancangco in the committee, which oversees the implementation of the Comelec's five-year modernization program.

Demetriou ordered Tancangco's replacement hours before she submitted her courtesy resignation to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Demetriou also ordered a special audit on the financial status of the National Precinct Mapping project and the purchase of service vehicles for the Comelec's modernization project.

Tancangco, as head of the modernization committee and of the committee's pre-qualification and awards committee, had approved the purchase of service vehicles worth over P20 million.

Demetriou said Tancangco had to be replaced while the Commission on Audit was conducting the special audit.

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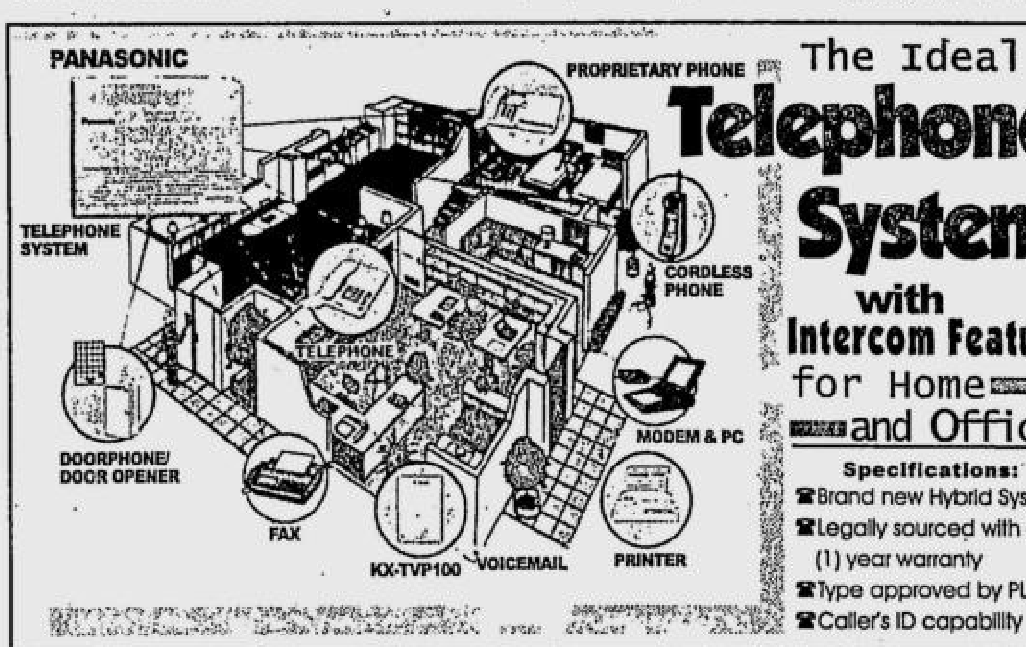

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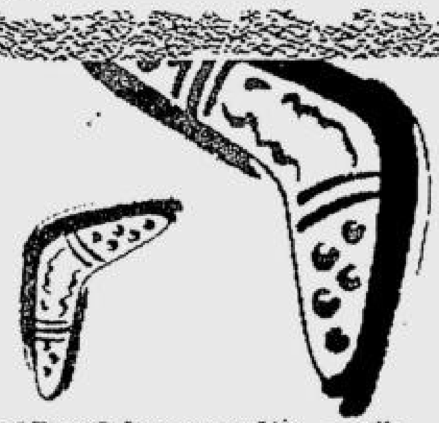

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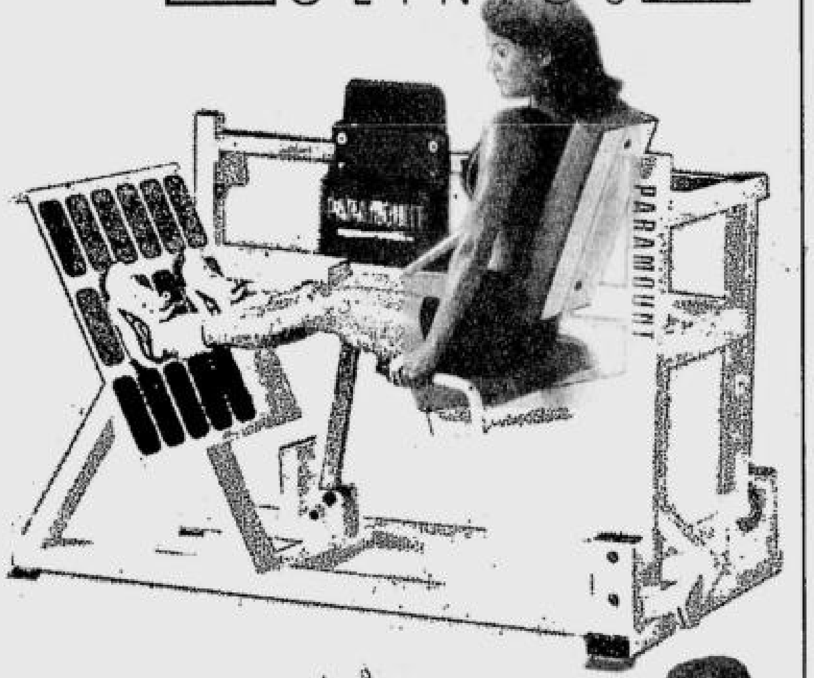

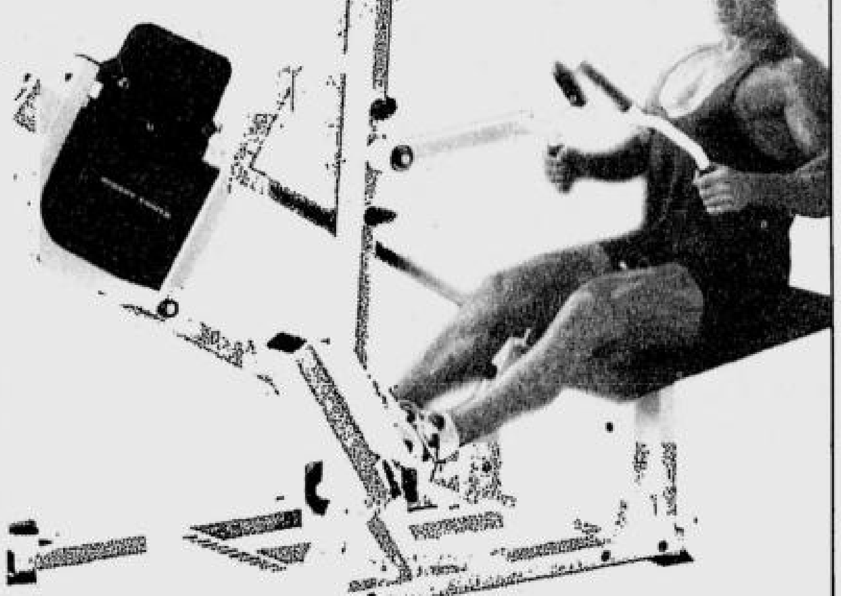

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OPINION

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Never again

EDITORIAL

IT IS well that President Macapagal has ruled out any deal with ousted president Joseph Estrada. Ms Macapagal has rejected an outright amnesty for Estrada and said she would let justice take its course. We take this to mean that all criminal charges already filed or yet to be filed against Estrada will be pursued to their logical and just conclusion.

Some sectors say that one shouldn't kick a man when he's down. But this is not a case of kicking a man who is down. This is a case of obtaining justice for 75 million Filipinos against a deposed president who is alleged to have accepted bribes, committed graft and corruption and plunder, betrayed the public trust and violated the Constitution. No man is above the law, not even a former president who used his high office to commit grievous crimes against the people.

The first priority now is to file criminal charges and issue orders for Estrada's immediate arrest and detention for crimes against the people. The former president has said that he was not going to flee the country but we can't take him at his word. He has lied many times before and he can be lying again. At an unguarded moment, he and his family (families?) may just fly out to a country with which the Philippines has no extradition treaty.

The criminal charges should provide the basis for the issuance of hold-departure orders against Estrada and his confederates in crime. If a hold-departure order can be easily issued against a journalist accused of libel, we see no reason why hold-departure orders cannot be issued against Estrada and Company who may be accused of major crimes, including plunder which is punishable by death.

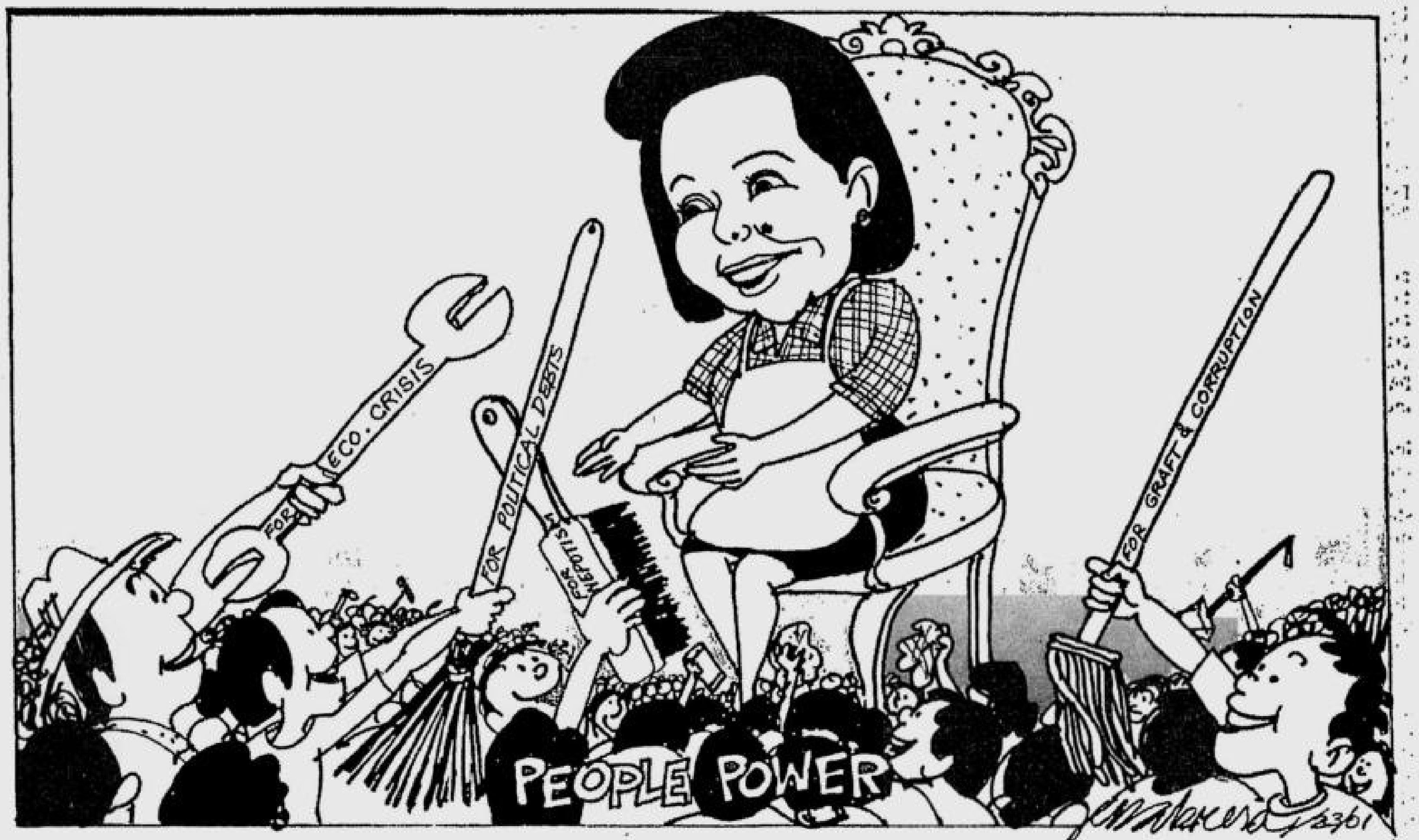
The new administration should move quickly to sequester the assets—the mansions, townhouses, condominiums, shopping malls, bank accounts, etc.—acquired, set up or opened with the use of money suspected to be ill-gotten. These assets should be placed under the direct supervision of a body composed of persons of unimpeachable integrity.

Let the new President be put on notice that the entire nation and the whole world are watching her and will observe how she will act on the criminal charges against Estrada. In People Power I, the dictator Ferdinand E. Marcos and his cronies and partners in crime were allowed to go virtually scot-free. They have since been laughing their way **from** the bank. And they are using their millions, if not billions, to further corrupt and buy off people and organizations. This should not be allowed to happen again.

President Macapagal said that this should be a time for healing and reconciliation, for unifying a shattered nation. Yes, we agree that there should be healing and reconciliation. But as Pagbabago@Pilipinas, an umbrella group that has taken on the function of a watchdog on the new administration, said, "There can be no healing without justice, no reconciliation without repentance and penance." The first part of the struggle has come to an end, as the group rightly observed, but another struggle—for justice for the entire nation—is just beginning.

Some people may say that the punishment to be meted out to Estrada and Company—should they be convicted by the courts on final judgment—would be a case of revenge or vindictiveness. We don't think so. This is not revenge. This is not vindictiveness. This is going to be justice. Emile Durkheim, the French sociologist, came up about a hundred years ago with the concept of "a common conscience"—a set of cultural and moral values which are held in common by a nation and which give it coherence and unity. Fr. John J. Carroll, S.J., said that "when the common conscience is grossly violated, the community rises up and protests by punishing the violator."

It is the common conscience that demands punishment for a president who was supposed to protect the people and look after their welfare and interest but who instead grossly violated their rights, brazenly made the presidency a personal moneymaking venture and shamelessly worked against their interest. We let Marcos off with just a virtual slap on the wrist after Edsa I in 1986. A similar thing should not be allowed to happen after Edsa II. *Nunca mas.* Never again.



GMA owes presidency not to tradpols but to the people

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THERE was a long line of people at Malacañang early yesterday morning, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's first day in office. They were applicants for Cabinet positions. There are also the *sipsips,* sycophants, influence-seekers, and the new cronies and wheeler-dealers. Already, they are gnawing at the foundations of the Macapagal administration like hungry and greedy termites that will send it crashing to the ground like the unlamented Estrada administration.

President Macapagal is in danger, not from her enemies but from her friends and members of her family. Exhilarated by her sudden ascent to power, she will naturally be grateful and generous and distribute the spoils of politics to friends who she believes helped her get there. This is the first and biggest mistake that she will commit. That was the first and biggest mistake of Erap, her predecessor. Erap was grateful to the friends who helped him become president and, like a doting father, he winked at their greed and opportunism and even helped them get what they wanted. Gratitude is supposed to be a virtue, but when you are in the seat of power, it paradoxically becomes a deadly vice. For there will always be people who will take advantage of your gratitude and use it for their selfish ends.

Erap was used by his friends—and mistresses. Friends with monosyllabic surnames like Dante Tan, Atong Ang, Lucio Co, Frank Chua and Jaime Dichaves. With friends like them, Erap did not need any enemies. Look where his gratitude to them got him.

On the saddest day of his life, when he left Malacañang last Saturday, where were these friends of his? Nowhere. Most of them had hightailed it out of the country without even so much as a goodbye to him, leaving him to take the rap.

Where were the mistresses on whom he lavished luxury mansions and townhouses? Nowhere. They flew the coop when they saw what was coming.

Where were the Dirty Eleven senators who triggered People Power 2 by voting to suppress evidence in the impeachment trial and led to his sudden downfall? Had they voted instead to open that fateful second envelope, Erap would still be president today—at least until the second week of February when the Senate would vote on his guilt or innocence. They thought they were helping Erap by suppressing evidence; instead they hastened his downfall. Again, with friends like them Erap did not need any enemies. Where were they in Erap's hour of greatest need? Nowhere. Not one of them showed up at Malacañang to say goodbye. They were all preparing to leave the country to save their own skins.

In the end, only Loi, the martyred wife, whom he cheated and took for granted for many years while he made love to several opportunistic women, and their three children stuck with him. As I watched those sad farewells in Malacañang, I felt very sorry not for Erap but for Loi, who stayed with her man up to the bitter end. The mistresses had deserted him.

That is the lesson for you out there: Love your wife, ditch your mistresses. When the test comes, the wife will stick to her vows to love you 'til death do you part; the mistresses will ditch you before you do them.

President Macapagal should remember these sad scenes when she starts feeling grateful to the politicians now flocking to her. There will be extreme pressure for her to appoint this or that politician and she would have a hard time choosing. There is one easy way to choose. Anybody who applies or is pushed for the job should automatically be disqualified. With the small pay for Cabinet members and other government positions, why would anybody in his right mind want one unless he has an ulterior motive?

She doesn't have to be grateful to these jobseekers. They did not help her get elected to the presidency. They did not call the people to Edsa. Neither did they organize People Power 2. The people went to Edsa spontaneously, without anybody calling them, because of their anger at the Dirty Eleven for what they did. She owes a debt of gratitude to the people, not to any of the politicians. She shouldn't let the people down.

If she does, she can go the way of her predecessor. There can always be a People Power 3. Already, leftist groups are hitting her. And she has been on the job for only one day.

The presidency may be the most powerful job in the country, but without the support of the people, it is nothing. What the people gives, it can take away.

President Macapagal should not forget that.

***

JOKE of the day:

No more Erap jokes. Instead, there will be the joke of the day, which can be Gloria jokes or somebody else's jokes. Remember, these are only jokes. We should retain our sense of humor in these trying times. Here is the first:

There are so many ambitious politicians scrambling to be appointed vice president. The names of Senate President Aquilino Pimentel, former Speaker Manuel Villar, Senators Teofisto Guingona and Raul Roco have been mentioned.

But the first qualification should be that he should see eye to eye with the President. Nobody has that qualification except Sen. Juan Flavier.

Justice

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

ANGELO Reyes, the AFP chief of staff who defected to People Power at the 11th hour, would say later he asked for only one thing, which was that Erap be allowed to "exit with dignity." Whom he addressed his request—or demand—to, he did not say. Who agreed to grant him that request—or demand—he did not say.

They ought to be shot. He had no business asking for it. His sole business was to make sure the President left without harm. It was not to make sure the President left with dignity.

Of course, we are not barbarians, and probably found it in our hearts to feel pity at the sight of the fallen Erap, staggering out of Malacañang Palace, laden with the cares of life and a bad hangover. We are not barbarians and probably shed a tear or two at the sight of the newly risen Erap waving out of his second-story window in San Juan at his loyal neighbors. I know I did, although my afterthought was to wonder if San Juan should not secede from the Republic.

Ferdinand Marcos was pitiful too when he left, his face puffed up with *lupus,* his brain mistaking Hawaii for Paoay. Marie Antoinette was pitiful too when she went, mounting the scaffold to be separated from a head she seldom used. The spectacle of people who once wielded power of life and death over other people reduced to utter powerlessness, thrashing about just to survive, is awesome. We are not barbarians, we are touched.

But that is not a reason to ask that they be allowed to exit with dignity. That is not a reason to ask that they be allowed to exit at all. Tyrants or crooks have not been punished enough simply because they have fallen or fled. Justice has not been served simply because they have been overthrown or driven into obscurity.

The sight of Erap, the most popular president in Philippine history, brought down by an act of popular will tugs at the heart. But far more so does the sight of street children sprawled on the sidewalk, separated from the cares of life by the poisonous fumes of rugby, while the mansions of mistresses loom over them like an evil eye. Even more so is the sight of a child soaked in blood being carried out by a Good Samaritan from a wreckage of twisted metal and debris caused by a bomb.

That is what galls about Reyes' request—or demand—that the President who had been good to him but not to his country be allowed to exit with dignity. And that is what galls about the way the representatives of the new government negotiated Erap's exit—without transparency, without openness, without honesty. That people who got to power gratuitously—no, by sheer luck—should feel free to exclude the very people who brought them to that pass—it brings back memories of the way Cory Aquino bungled the first Edsa and made a second one necessary.

But whatever deals they struck with Erap—and we will continue to suspect the worst until we see better—they will not prosper. The mighty "texters" are right: We may not stop until we see justice done. No forgiveness without restitution, no reconciliation without punishment, no harmony without justice. The new President has talked of healing wounds as the basis for making a fresh start. Well, wounds are not healed by putting Band Aid on them, particularly where they cut to the bone and are infected. They are healed by excising the pus from them.

The crimes that Erap wreaked upon the nation are the source of its wound. The punishment the nation will mete out to Erap is the source of its cure. Before they eventually abandoned their posts, like rats leaving a sinking ship, Erap's officials liked to say that crooks occupied the presidential office in the past, crooks would occupy the presidential office in the future. Who was there to assure the power wouldn't go to the heads of Erap's successors and stay their itching hands?

The answer is simple: Not who, but what. Prosecuting Erap in a court of law will. Jailing Erap if he is found guilty will.

The only reason the thievery happens again and again in the highest places in this land is that thieves are never punished. At worst, they lose power and retire to a life of gentility, such as crooks are capable of being genteel, having spent a lifetime increasing their loot rather than improving their mind. The solution to heinous crime is not punishing criminals heinously. The solution to heinous crime is catching heinous criminals and putting them away permanently. We've always been very good at inventing the worst punishment for crimes, we've never been very good at catching the worst criminals and putting them away.

Aquino never did. She forgave the torturers and the murderers in uniform, she let the crooks and highway robbers in coat-and-tie go free. Having done that, she felt free to unleash the brain-eating cultists and basket-hooded vigilantes on human rights lawyers and church workers. Having done that, she felt free to unleash her lean and hungry kin and friends, whose appetites had been whetted by the waiting, on the *kaban ng bayan.* That was what begun the process that made People Power II inevitable.

We prosecute Erap in a court of law, like South Korea did its past presidents, and we will persuade the current government to discover the fear of God and the people. We jail Erap if we find him guilty, like South Korea did its crooks, and we will persuade the current government to discover the rule of law and justice. We adopt a policy of no forgiveness without restitution, no reconciliation without punishment, no harmony without justice, and we will never need to mount another Edsa again.

Next time I hear someone cry out reconciliation and sing sugary songs of praise, I will tie him to a chair and make him listen to the ululations of Mike Velarde and other evangelists till the pietistic bull comes out of his ears. I'll probably throw in a song or two by April Boy, though I grant that is unusually cruel and inhuman punishment.

While at this, how in heaven's name did people like Jaime Dichaves and Atong Ang manage to go to the airport named after Tessie Oreta's brother and take a flight out of the country? Immigration would say they had no hold order on either one. Maybe, though it is not hard to believe some of them might soon be able to open up dollar-exchange outlets of their own. But what were the people behind Macapagal doing? They were so busy jockeying for position they could not see that certifiable thieves were escaping to Hong Kong? They were so busy securing their own fortunes they could not think of recovering the country's first? They were so busy looking at the beginnings of their careers they could not see the ends of justice?

It leaves a bad taste in the mouth.

'GMA, you better be a good girl'

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

LAST Sunday afternoon, my family and I joined hundreds of people at the thanksgiving Mass officiated by Jaime Cardinal Sin at the Edsa Shrine in thanksgiving for the peaceful People Power II. As we worked our way into the chapel, a woman approached me and said, "Mrs. Cunanan, can you tell our new government officials through your column to please listen to the people? *Sana huwag na maulit ang* corruption *at katiwalian sa gobyerno.*" All over the nation, this is the plea to the new administration by a people seared by all the irregularities in the old administration. *Sana po, huwag nang maulit,* they cry.

* * *

As I stood on the edge of the over-crowded stage at the Edsa Shrine during Macapagal's inauguration, my eyes wandered over the forest of posters and banners hanging from the flyover. One rather crude, homemade poster struck me. It read: "GMA, you better be a good girl." That message said it all for the citizens, after former President Estrada's lamentable record in both his public and private life.

The most applauded part of Ms Macapagal's inaugural speech, which she was said to have written herself, was item No. 2 of she termed as her "core beliefs." Said she: "We must improve moral standards in government and society, in order to provide a strong foundation for good governance." Some people are plainly skeptical and cynical about this new moral order that she has promised; but I think that the majority of the people are willing to give her the benefit of the doubt on its delivery. Let's pray that she will not disappoint us.

* * *

What few people realize is that over the past three months since the Chavit Singson exposé, the hand of Estrada crony Danding Cojuangco was all over the place. During the Estrada regime, Danding was not so visible as he was during the Marcos era (recall that he and wife Gretchen flew to Paoay with Marcos in 1986), but his right-hand man at San Miguel Corp., vice chair Ramon Ang, was always in the Palace. And where Ang was, there was Cojuangco. The two men Clarissa Ocampo saw with Jaime Dichaves at Estelito Mendoza's office whom she could not identify, were Ang and Marcos' lawyer, Lolong Lazaro. Sources say that in the early weeks of the impeachment trial, Ang was directing all the operations to transfer the Estrada accounts in various banks, safeguarding them for Erap. One of those emptied was the P3.2-billion account in Equitable PCI Bank.

* * *

It is also said that over the past two months, Ang sat at every meeting of the defense team headed by Andres Narvasa. When the Macapagal transition team sat down with the Estrada team in the Palace Friday evening and early Saturday morning, Ang was with Executive Secretary Edgardo Angara, who led the Palace team. It has been noted that up to the end the Cojuangco group stuck to Estrada: Angara, Ang, Mendoza and Ernesto Maceda. Mendoza flew out of Manila Thursday, but talk was that before this, he withdrew large amounts from Allied Bank for himself and Estrada.

What will form the new opposition to Macapagal will be elements from Angara's faction of the LDP and the 18 House members from the Cojuangco-controlled Nationalist People's Coalition. Backed by the money of Estrada and Cojuangco, they are expected to put up a spirited contest in the May 2001 elections and beyond.

* * *

The Macapagal transition team, composed of Renato de Villa, Alberto Romulo and Hernando Perez, sat down with the Estrada team at 10 p.m. Friday at the Mabini Hall in Malacañang, to discuss the orderly transfer of power. That meeting lasted until 2 a.m. Saturday without yielding any agreement, so a second meeting was held four hours later. This time Macapagal's team included her chief of staff, lawyer Renato Corona.

During the negotiations, Angara's team asked for a number of conditions which the Macapagal group deemed unacceptable. Among them were full immunity for Estrada, the assurance that he would keep all his property and assets and for Macapagal to extol him to "the high heavens." The Palace people were also supposed to draft a resignation letter for Estrada to sign, a task that fell on the chief at the Presidential Management Staff, Macel Fernandez.

When the letter was presented to the Macapagal people, Corona blew his top. Nowhere was the word "resignation" written. Corona told Fernandez, "Macel, you're a bar topnotcher. Surely you know that this is no resignation letter." Fernandez kept silent. After some time, Romulo scribbled a note to Corona, saying, "We better get out of here as nothing will come out of these negotiations."

What amazed him,, Romulo later told this columnist, was how the Palace team could only see what was good for Estrada and not the welfare of the country at that very critical point. A few hours later, Macapagal was sworn into office by Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

* * *

Now Estrada sympathizers are questioning the legality of the new President's assumption of office, arguing that Estrada did not resign and therefore the position was not vacant. But who is to argue this when the entire Supreme Court concurred in the Chief Justice's move to administer Macapagal's oath, and all the justices showed up at her inauguration. Moreover, both chambers of Congress have thrown their support behind her through their respective leaders, Senate President Nene Pimentel and Speaker Noli Fuentebella. In addition, the whole world, led by UN Secretary General Kofi Anan, has already recognized the new President.

* * *

Two hours after Macapagal's oath-taking, Estrada and his family left the Palace. Saturday was a sad day for them, but as a friend of theirs noted, former First Lady Loi Ejercito actually looked radiant and beaming, in contrast to her husband's distraught appearance. One reason could be that for the first time in memory, Estrada actually had his arm around his wife's shoulders, as though he was full of gratitude for her loyalty to him. Now Dr. Loi will have him (nearly) all to herself.

The Estradas motored to the San Juan municipal hall where Erap spent 17 years of his life as mayor, and he got a lift from the partisans who had assembled there to cheer him up. But that high was short-lived, for when they got to Polk Street, neighbors dressed in black lined the street, some with "Resign" placards.

* * *

Sunday evening, however, the Polk Street residence came to life with a grand party. Among those who trooped there were defense lawyers Andres Narvasa and Raul Daza with their families. The lawyers were seen huddled with the former president, briefing him about the difference between a de jure and a de facto government. Pretty soon Estrada was heard explaining this point to his guests, although it was clear that he wasn't recognized as president even in his own neighborhood.

Is Gloria lucky?

COMMENTARY

Leandro V. Coronel

MANY Filipinos must be saying: "*Ang suwerte naman ni Gloria ano, Presidente na siya.*" But is Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo really lucky to have succeeded deposed President Estrada?

Edsa II came as a whirlwind, wreaking havoc on the political status quo. In a matter of a few days, the political establishment was turned on its head. The tumult created by the exposé of presidential wrongdoing by Estrada's spurned buddy, Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, culminated in a reprise of the 1986 Edsa People Power. President Macapagal is a child of Edsa II.

Macapagal's Cinderella-like ascension to the presidency was almost anti-climactic. The first days and nights of Edsa II were full of foreboding and tension. Would Erap resign or fight to the bitter end? The people who stormed to Edsa made sure by their numbers and determination that Erap would have no other choice but to resign.

Give up, Erap did, and Macapagal, suddenly, was President. Edsa II was almost too easy to be true—no tanks, no persuasion fighter plane sorties. Wasn't she lucky to be at the right place at the right time?

Edsa I installed Cory Aquino a president, succeeding the toppled Ferdinand Marcos. Just as the first Edsa gave birth to a frightful and uncertain new era, Edsa II also ushers in another perilous period in our history. Ninoy Aquino had warned that Marcos' successor, who ironically would turn out to be his widow, would have a daunting task ahead. President Macapagal faces a similar test.

Just as Edsa I spawned almost impossible expectations of the then new president, so has Edsa II created expectations that may be impossible to meet.

The new President inherits a government in disarray and a nation in despair. Her new job will require her to be visionary, imaginative and bold as she carries out her mandate. Although her inaugural address wasn't memorable, by her words she knows she will have a lot of healing to do to reunite the nation.

Estrada divided the nation as never before. Marcos had become so unpopular that near the end of his strongman rule, he had lost the people's support except for a bunch of fanatics. Estrada, on the other hand, succeeded in polarizing the nation, pitting the poor against the rich. For this division along class lines, President Macapagal will have to glue the nation back together.

The economy is near ruin and she is the first to know that, being an economist. She will have to act decisively to resuscitate the ailing economic sector. The dispersal of the leeches that were bleeding the economy dry will help bring back investor confidence. But Macapagal will still have to put in place the right policies and incentives for an economic rebound. She will have to put in place the right people in the right places in her Cabinet and other key agencies. She will have to act quickly, and it's a good sign that this sector is right up her alley.

Because we're a people consumed by politics, this arena will remain unwieldy and give Macapagal headaches. True to their tradition of turncoatism, politicians will now shamelessly flock to the new President's camp. But those who will find themselves in the opposition will give her a hard time, blocking her initiatives and frustrating her plans.

Philippine politics needs reforming, basically to strengthen a genuine check-and-balance structure between (or among) political parties. And the voters must learn to elect the right politicians, not the usual crooks and thieves who perpetuate our system of patronage.

Macapagal will have to set in place measures to overhaul our age-old culture that nurtures the kind of feudal politics that denies ordinary citizens a hand in governance. She will face pressures from favor-seekers who will swarm like locusts all over her. She will have to face down those who will want to help themselves to choice positions and the juiciest contracts available. She will have to resist pressure from the same elite that has traditionally controlled the economy.

Former Senate President Jovito Salonga has reminded the President that her father, President Diosdado Macapagal's first directive was to ban relatives and friends from partaking of government largesse through contracts and favors. This kind of prescription, like Erap's "*walang kamag-anak*" dictum, is often paid mere lip service. Macapagal must be serious about imposing such a prohibition if she wants to succeed in office and not suffer the same fate as Erap.

Whether one is pro or anti-Erap or an impartial observer (as this writer), one can't help but feel sad at the sight of a president leaving in disgrace. It's never pleasant to witness a high official's downfall. But a leader's ouster is particularly sad because it signals yet another failure in leadership which has been our history. A country like ours that aspires to greatness cannot afford this kind of stop-and-go approach to nation-building.

Like Aquino before her, Macapagal will be subjected to tremendous pressure and expectations. And, like Aquino, Macapagal may even be subject to attempts by traditional troublemakers and other mischievous elements to oust her. One isn't sure if she's lucky or otherwise to be president at this point.

Macapagal has her work cut out for her (and we haven't even mentioned the grim task of combating poverty, drug addiction, crime, the Mindanao problem). Although she didn't ask for the job directly, or at least before 2004, she is now in the hot seat and will have to do her darndest to succeed.

Under the circumstances of her accession to the presidency, Macapagal would do well to rejoice in the words of the Roman poet, Horace: "To have begun is to have done half of the task." It's now up to her to do her best with the rest of her mission.

Leandro V. Coronel is a former spokesman of The World Bank in Washington, D.C.

Losing touch

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

MY e-mail worked double time during the past week, what with all the comments, mostly negative, coming in. Okay, so it implies as the unlamented Joseph Estrada claimed that his supporters can't afford PCs and it's the so-called elite who was against him. Which is a crock of s..t, since what he and his cronies did to the country was more damaging to the *mahihirap* than to the elite who always have options.

It is just possible that the 11 senator-judges who hopefully signed *finito* to any further public careers had lost touch with the public pulse. No doubt being insulated from the realities of living in a country where the vast majority struggle for existence and subsist on the bare minimum while you scoot around in million-peso SUVs trailed by bodyguards and a siren does irreparable damage to your sense of reality. Utilizing government-paid expense accounts for a lifestyle of the rich and famous or celebrating your birthday with a cast of thousands at some crony's expense doesn't help to keep you in touch with your constituents, most of whom enter hotels through the back doors. How can anyone live in a mansion worth over P200 million while fellow Filipinos you have sworn to serve live under bridges and in culverts? Perhaps with all the sycophants around you, it's easy enough to believe in your own invincibility. But here is the opinion of a citizen forced to seek employment abroad:

"It really is too bad that people (e.g. certain senators) are only interested in short-term (ill-gotten) gain. They don't give a fig for the country or for their fellow human beings (let alone countrymen). Their idea of nationalism stacks up there with the Africans, certain Middle Easterners, etc. An American guy who is a business acquaintance of mine grew up in the Philippines, and he said to me recently that the country should be the jewel of Asia. *Kawawa talaga*! I watched the Senate proceedings on TV. Too bad they couldn't throw things at the sell-outs."

Too bad, indeed. But with Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, it wasn't even a case of throwing things, it was a look, a glance, a peek behind a post she didn't like. The woman, a legend in her own mind, needs to be pulled down a peg or two and reminded that you don't demand respect, you earn it.

As for Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta, didn't Gov. Luis Singson say that she used to hang around to make the President's mahjong wall? The dignity befitting a senator of the land apparently escaped the gig-dancing Oreta. Had she realized she was dancing on the grave of her public career she might have been more circumspect.

In another letter, the correspondent asks, "What would it take to get Estrada (and maybe a few others) excommunicated? I'm not exactly being facetious here. There are probably grounds for it and it would be a very efficient way of removing whatever 'mandate' he thinks he has. With the Church as influential as it is in Manila, that would send a huge message to the people and make a statement internationally. Don't you think you could suggest it to Cardinal Sin or Brother Andrew or somebody?"

I'm afraid the letter writer overestimates my influence. Besides I don't know the grounds for excommunication, never having had the need for the information. However, early on I really wondered what the bishops and the parish priests thought about Estrada crowing about his bastards and openly traveling with one of his mistresses in the presidential yacht. I had to ask whether the Church had struck adultery and concubinage off the list of sins since not a word of criticism escaped the clergy in public. At the risk of being labeled holier-than-thou and sanctimonious to boot, let me clarify that Filipinos for one are overtly proud of being "the only Catholic country in Asia," and two, that allegedly the public was paying for the bodyguards and other expenses of Estrada's unbridled appetites. The former claim rankles because of the hypocrisy, given the widespread corruption, and the latter, of course, needs no explanation for raising people's blood pressure.

An opinion expressed in the language of Tinseltown from multi-awarded director Marilou Abaya says it in a more colorful manner: "As an actor, Erap does not understand the word 'RESIGN.' He has to be ordered 'CUT!' and 'PACK UP!' If he still pretends not to hear, just turn off the lights, switch off the camera, drag him out of the set and have him brought home. He's fired. That should teach him, and indeed all of us, to stop casting action stars in the role of public servants. It always turns out to be a disaster (movie). *Wakas*. Time to get real."

Estrada won't be the first or the last politician not to know when to call it quits, although no doubt he was being encouraged to stay on by his bosom buddies who couldn't believe the party was over. Finally, in case some of us are suffering any more delusions regarding our own importance or that a miracle other than our own efforts will get us out of this mess, consider the following opinion: "In the meantime, it seems that poor 'Pinas is really a banana country of no consequence—neither the LA Times, nor any of the news channels, have coverage of the latest developments there. I have to follow the action over the Internet. It's a tad irritating that the 10th anniversary of the Gulf War was given precedence over the present day political turmoil in my home country. Americans really are too self-centered."

Prosaic as this may sound, remember: "Pray as though everything depended on God. Work as though everything depended on you." The first part is easy; the second may be more difficult.

And I thought I was the teacher

YOUNGBLOOD

Zharloemar G. Carbonell

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

UP to this day, people can't help but make sure they heard me right whenever I tell them what I do for a living. I guess my being an elementary teacher is still a (pleasant ?) surprise for everyone. One would think I should have joined either the corporate world or put up my own business like most of my contemporaries.

However, no amount of persuasion would have pushed me to any other field. In fact, when I was growing up, my playmates would say: "I want to be a doctor!" or "I'm going to be a lawyer like my dad." Not me. As soon as I walked to my very first classroom at the back of our village church, I knew I was going to be a teacher.

Perhaps I loved being a kid so much that I promised that even if I could not remain as a child forever, I could at least work with them. There is just something about children that is so refreshing. They smile freely, speak their mind candidly, do things without inhibitions. They are so free of worldly attachment that I cannot help but envy their simple life.

The academe is a mixture of rediscovering the wonder of youth and opening a mine of labor. Once, I was asked if my work was from 8 to 4. I was about to say yes when I realized one cannot just drop being a teacher as she takes off her uniform. The love for children, learning and sharing wisdom are all rolled into one and tucked in the heart. That compartment just opens at any given time without warning. It's like being a mother. Once a woman becomes a mother, that instinct just takes over the old self.

Being a teacher has also given me the gift of seeing beyond material fulfillment. At dinner, family and friends share their excitement over a deal closed or a project completed or the large amounts a merger will bring them. When it's my turn to share, my lines invariably revolve around these topics: "Oh, Ralph can now make his nouns and verbs agree!" or "Franz uses appropriate prepositions in his sentences!"

Then they give me the "big deal" look, but I don't blame them. For how can I ever let them share my satisfaction over these things when I myself cannot put into words how it feels to witness a child learning a simple yet, for him, a very new, concept?

Nothing can be more gratifying than reading children's letters saying they love you next to their parents or looking at a drawing which calls you the world's greatest teacher. Nothing can be as satisfying as having parents wanting to meet you because it's you their children talk about during meals and family outings.

Then, there are the everyday occurrences that tug at my heart: little things like notes and anecdotes of self-sacrifice. For instance, I was in the middle of a lecture when Pia darted out of the classroom. I, of course, followed and saw that she was frantically trying to catch a wish feather. When she finally got it, she held it close to her heart and made a wish, her eyes twinkling. After making that very important act, she went back inside the classroom and returned to her seat. I laughingly commented that she must have wanted what she wished very badly. My heart melted when she answered, " Oh, I offered that wish for you, Miss."

So, when my friends brag about the amount of money they're going to collect at the end of the month, I close my eyes and remember my students' sincere smiles and the sound of their laughter and I tell myself, " Now, you can't put a price on those things!" Obviously, there is no greater joy than doing what your heart desires.

Empowered. That's one of the things I feel when I am inside the classroom. Needless to say, though, along with it comes the heavy burden of responsibility. Understandably, students look up to their teachers. I hear them using my expressions, see them copying my gestures and sometimes even the way I approach a problem. I feel flattered that they have picked up some of my habits, although sometime I worry that they might pick up the wrong ones? I am not perfect, even if strive to always act properly when I am in front of them.

Being a teacher also just pulls you from the sky of invincibility and plants you firmly on the ground. Just when you think everything's going right, a student approaches you in despair because she cannot understand why she has to change "y" to "i" and add "es" when she writes about more than one baby, while she can simply add an "s" when she writes about more than one highway.

I almost fell out of my chair when I checked Jerome's adjective table. He had been taught that fat, ____, _____ can be answered correctly by writing "fatter" and "fattest" on the blank spaces. So you can imagine my surprise when I saw how he completed the item _____, kinder, _____. His answer : nursery, kinder, prep. Now I know why some teachers just never age.

Teaching has ceased to be a profession for me. It has become an everyday mission. Unlike the typical set-up where in there is benefactor and a beneficiary, in the classroom both parties gain tremendously. What is humbling, however, is the fact that more often than not, the kids don't even know that they have filled a void in a teacher's life. I, for one, am honored to be given the privilege to share with them what I know. Then, when they use the information to improve their life in school or at home, I can feel no greater joy. Hearing them in the cafeteria saying, "Can I...Oops! May I buy a cola, please!" is fulfilling in itself.

Now I am having trouble with terms "student" and "teacher" for at any given moment, these two roles can be reversed without warning. My "students" have become my greatest "teachers" for they have taught me some gems that I take out from memory to strengthen and inspire me and the people around me. They have given definition and structure to my life and because of them, the urge to improve myself in all aspects has become my ultimate goal. Once we were discussing questions that begin with "wh." For this activity, I asked them, "If God were to appear before you now and you have only one 'wh' question, what would it be?" Knowing 10-year olds, I expected most of them to give the same answers as Eric's: "Why are there only seven colors in the rainbow? Who is stronger: you or Stone Cold? What country do you sleep in?" Instead, they asked surprisingly relevant questions the answers to which people much older and wiser are still looking for. Questions like: Why did Dad have to die? Why did Mom leave me with Lola? Why am I always sick?

I was once told that there's actually no right way of dealing with situations such as this except admitting to oneself that that's exactly why you're here: to facilitate and not be the sole source of learning. Some things just cannot be explained inside the classroom. There is a world out there which will teach them everything they need to know. I can only hope I have equipped them with the tools to know things like moral responsibility, better judgment and critical thinking. They should form part of their "survival kit."

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Notice to Youngblood contributors

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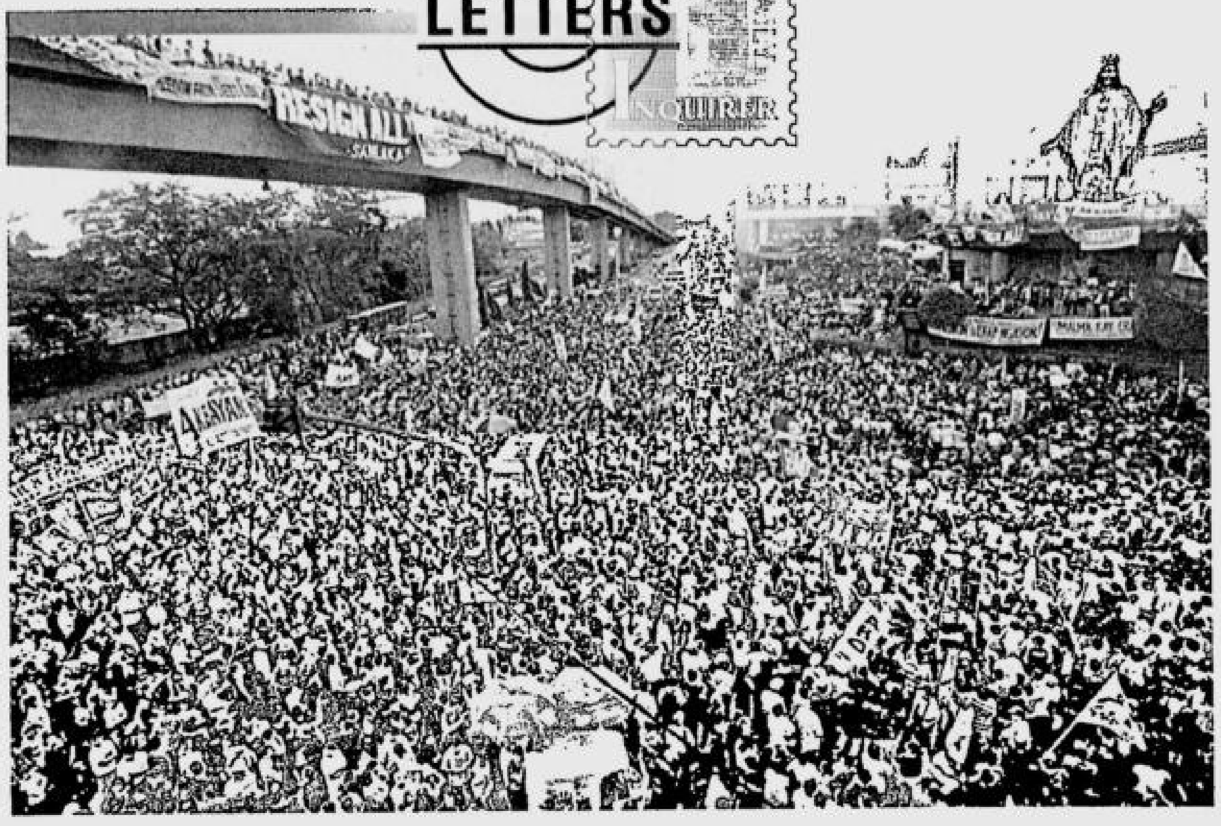
Edsa 2 isn't over yet



IN THE FIRST Edsa Revolution we fought for freedom from a dictator. And we succeeded.

This time, the Edsa cry is for justice. And we have not yet succeeded. Ousting Erap is simply the first step in that process, so the fight is not over but it has only begun. I agree fully with Maribel Ongpin and Katrina Legarda who said that vindication and accountability is a critical first step, because this is truly what the people are fighting for.

Today, I read about the flight of Erap cronies and cash, reminiscent of what happened during and after the first Edsa Revolution. The term "sequestered funds" brought back ugly feelings of how inept we were in resolving the Marcos monies.

We cannot and should not let this happen again. Thieves should be brought to justice and not be let off practically unscathed to run for public office or we will continue to be governed by thieves. We should not need a third Edsa. History should not be a pattern of unresolved issues rearing their ugly heads, but a process of growth from learning.

The indignation I took to the streets these past few days stemmed from the brazenness of politicians in flaunting their dishonesty in our faces and taking us for idiots. Or maybe they thought we were accomplices to their self-serving priorities because we tolerated so much for so many years and we would continue to do so and that fatal moment in the impeachment trial was going to be passed over like we did the BW scandal, recovering the Marcos billions, the fate of Dacer, the recent bombings and other daily iniquities. We are beginning to prove them wrong by ousting Erap. And we should continue in the coming weeks to prove them wrong.

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo touts "leadership by example" as her guide for governance. The promise of her leadership contrasts strongly with the sloppy governance we got under Erap. But she also propagates politics with a platform, contrasting with the past administration's penchant for politics based on personality and *utang na loob*. On this basis, I am optimistic now, a feeling I have not had for a while about our country.

But the new President cannot do this alone. Just as we helped turn the tide of leadership, we have to help build our country by continuing to exercise vigilance, choosing well the people we vote into office in May, paying our taxes, and making the right decisions every day. We are a good 10 years behind our Asian neighbors economically. Probably we can be sustained by our environment for only another 20 years unless we solve the garbage problem and air pollution and stop abusing our ecosystems. After storming the streets of Edsa, what a pity it would be if we just moved to the sidewalks as mere spectators.—**SUSAN ROXAS, Malate Manila**

Wonderful day to be a Filipino

I'M a Filipino temporarily staying here in the United States. I just got the news early this morning about Erap's resignation and the peaceful transfer of the presidency to Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. I want to tell you that at this moment I feel so proud to be a Filipino and that I'm thankful for all the people who sacrificed and supported People Power II. *Mabuhay ang Pilipinas!*

For the past year, it has been very difficult and humiliating to explain to foreigners why things are the way they were in our country, particularly why we had Erap as President. But now, I feel our country, our people, has showed greatness of spirit, which we have not had before Edsa I. A greatness of spirit that we can truly claim be Filipino.

We are quick to forgive, as shown by our acceptance of the Marcoses and the Estradas. But we, as a people, no longer have an infinite tolerance for corruption and incompetence. I believe that the seed of people empowerment, which was planted in Edsa I, has begun to sprout. The challenge to Macapagal and everyone in government is to be faithful to their path and never to forget that we, as a people, are empowered to change the course of our country for the better.

It's a wonderful day to be a Filipino. *Mabuhay ang Pilipinas!*—**Richard Gutierrez, abelin@ qwest.net**

* * *

WE, the Filipinos in the United States, are also celebrating over another remarkable Filipino way of showing how democracy really works in our country. We are so proud to be Filipinos.

Although we are not there physically to share the celebration and the making of another triumphant history with all our *kababayans*, we here in USA, particularly in California, are celebrating with you spiritually. We haven't missed watching every single moment that has happened there in our country. It was a relief for us because we have our loved ones living there and we cannot be at ease if our country is in turmoil.

What happened at Edsa truly signifies that we Filipinos (excluding the Abu Sayyaf) are peace-loving citizens. Heck, if this happened in anywhere such as in the Middle East, people would have been killing each other. Because we are Filipinos, we are humane, and another bloodless revolution has again happened.

So, to the future presidents of the Philippines: Do not mess with Filipinos. We did it twice, and we can even do it again to save our country from opportunists like Joseph Estrada.—**MARISSA ORTEGA, RN, 324 Vel Place, Fairfield**

Filipinos given a second chance

GOD is good. In 1986, he gave us People Power. But we failed Him. Over the years, the shadow of what we sought to expel never left our country. There were moments, but the sun never truly shone.

God is truly good. Today, he gave us People Power II. He is giving us a second chance to do what we should have done the first time around. We may have kicked out Erap, but the shadow is still there.

Erap is an actor. He let the press cover his departure from the seat of government so that we can take pity on him and his family. Let us not allow ourselves to be fooled. I myself somehow, in some humane way, feel sorry for the man. But let justice be done.

Erap should be punished for the crimes he has committed. Let us not shame the God that gave us all these gifts. Let us not shame the Lord that has given us a second chance. The best way to thank the Lord is to show Him that we will continue what He has done for us for the second time.

I'd like to borrow Conrado de Quiros' words to express how I feel:

"It is easy to topple a tyranny, it is not so easy to build a democracy. It is easy to fight for freedom, it is not so easy knowing what to do with it afterward. It is easy to do what is noble at some point in history, it is not so easy to do what is right in daily life…

"We're always capable of grand gestures, we're not always capable of filling the spaces in between. We throw everything during a fiesta and sink into miserable poverty afterward. We brave tanks to topple a tyrant one day and slink away in the face of abuse every day. We rise to heights of heroism only to fall to depths of mediocrity afterward."

The second envelope. That fateful Tuesday. The scene with Pimentel, Drilon, Magsaysay and Leviste made me cry. Soon thereafter, I was ill at ease. I watched TV. I listened to the radio. Then I went to sleep. But I got up and told myself: "I can't stay here and do nothing."

Finally at around 1 a.m., together with my wife, I headed for Edsa. I didn't stay for four straight days but I kept going back, particularly during the late nights and wee hours of the mornings to sustain the head count.

On Jan. 19, I celebrated my 35th birthday. I wished for something grand and God gave it to me: today Erap is no longer president.

God has guided us. Let us do the rest of the work. He granted my wish and I want to show my thanks, my praise. That is why I am writing this.

It is time for us to observe higher standards of morality and service. If we don't start now, when shall we start? This is our second chance. Let us not fail Him this time. I can't do this alone. We all have to do this together.—**GUL MURJANI, murjani@usa.net**

Where does one hide the loot?

ERAP'S defense team first tried to cook the evidence, at Estelito Mendoza's office. Didn't work. Next, they got the witnesses to disappear. Didn't work either. Laarni Enriquez and Joy Melendres skipped town, but Ed Espiritu did the same only after blowing the whistle, not just on Erap but on Andres Narvasa as well. The Erap team's last resort was to suppress the evidence, and refuse to open the second envelope. Unfortunately, Eggie Apostol and her media colleagues have made public the envelope's contents. Spoilsport busybodies.

The senators who sold their votes Tuesday night for 30 pieces of silver now have a problem: Where do you stash your loot?

If you deposit it in your bank, some tattletale teller will text the news all over town. Keep it under your pillow, and devaluation will make it worthless in a few months. Try and bring to Hong Kong to be exchanged for dollars, and some customs eager-beaver will insist on opening your 11 pieces of luggage and three hand-carrieds.

You can try to open a new bank account under a false name. But if you sign the signature cards with your left hand, make sure the trust officer is seated on your right, at least 15 feet away.—**J. S. ONG, 13 San Mateo, Bo. Capitolyo, Pasig City**

The White House on 20 January

No more Clintons, no more Gores,
No more sluts and no more whores.

No more interns with blue dresses,
No more cigars that make messes.

No more lies and no more fog,
No more tails that wag the dog.

No more fondling, no more squeezes,
No more hands above the kneezes.

No more sick administration,
No more laughing at our nation.

No more Carville or Begala,
No more Buddy, bring back Fala.

No more picking on Marines,
No more hurling soup tureens.

No more Bureau files found,
No more bodies in the ground.

No more turncoat Goergen too,
No more Cohen sans a clue.

No more failed Janet Reno,
No more having to take beano.

No more Albright simply dim,
No more treaties on a whim.

No more TV butts to kiss,
No more Stephanopolous.

No more trash or crap or crud,
No more splattering of mud.

No more trying to inhale—
No more White House—hello jail.

Let joy be unconfined—but not Slick Willie!—**DR. E.A. RICHARDS, P.E., 3228 So. 77th St. Milwaukee, WI 53219**

A letter to teenagers

Show some power
For the power of the people
And the power of the people
Won't stop

Last night, as I was giving out the remaining sandwiches my colleagues in Ateneo prepared for Edsa 2 participants, the enchanting rhythm brought about by this chant forced me to heed the call of the unstoppable power. In other words, I joined the mob. As if calling all warriors to prepare for a forthcoming confrontation, the chant woke up those who were sleeping for time was very crucial to the success or failure of the People Power II.

Now that we have a new President, the call keeps echoing in our youthful minds. If in the past we chose to prioritize our own self-interests over the welfare of our brethren, this challenge is bringing us to a higher level of struggle. As potent shapers of our nation's history, we have been tasked to uphold the highest ideals of truth.

Please bear in mind that the culture of corruption, immorality and ungodliness has to be overturned. Blaming things on others is now out of fashion precisely because we have already seen the buffet of dishonesty. Everywhere we go, we think that money can bring us power. I hope and pray that we will not become suckers for fame and wealth when P200 million is laid in front of us.

Perhaps, I am an idealist. But this is also about preserving one's dignity. You choose your power.—**LEEYAJ CORNELIO, Ateneo de Manila University**

Silly advice from lawyers

ONE of the last officials to leave President Erap's side, Interior Secretary Alfredo Lim, said that when he left Malacañang Friday afternoon, Erap was closeted with his lawyers and closest advisers. So I guess the soon-to-be-history leader's desperate *"huling hirit"*—calling for a snap election in May—must have been on the advice of the Fortun brothers, Raul Daza, Estelito Mendoza and Executive Secretary (hello, goodbye) Edgardo Angara with the enthusiastic long-distance encouragement of Erap's spokesperson Ernesto Maceda. Judging by the quality of the legal advice, I wouldn't be surprised if Edward Serapio and Mike Toledo were in on it, too.—**NILO U. MULLES, 5 Masbate St., Bago Bantay, Quezon City**

A happy new year

TALK about karma. The tide of public opinion began to turn against Erap, the epitome of machismo, after several women witnesses courageously testified against him during the impeachment trial. In the end, it was a woman who replaced him as president.

There was a second karmic twist to all this. Erap, who was criticized heavily for favoring cronies, mainly Chinese-Filipino, was finally ousted amid festive preparations, four days short of the Chinese New Year.

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

Like it or not, Chinese-Filipinos have to live with the perception that they were coddled by Erap. If he had not fallen from power, a civil disobedience movement would have been launched this week, and would have included a call to boycott companies owned by Chinese-Filipino cronies. I mentioned this in my column last week and pointed out how the call for a boycott had, sadly, taken on an almost racist tone. (I got one e-mail attacking all those with "monosyllabic names" and several days later got another one with a racial slur so offensive that I will not repeat it here.)

Several witnesses who testified against Erap at the impeachment trial were *Tsinoy* (mainly *Tsinay*, actually) and many more with those monosyllabic surnames joined in the rallies. The fact is that many *Tsinoy* react strongly to corruption and cronyism because we, too, are affected, as people in business and as professionals. We react as well to the feudal roots of these problems, knowing only too well that Erap combined the worst of Spanish and Chinese feudalism.

Spanish feudalism created a small native elite of landowners who eventually took over the reins of government, content with a primitive system of accumulating wealth by sitting back and collecting rent from tenants, while perpetuating themselves in power through political dynasties and a patronage system.

Enter the Chinese, many descended from peasants who left China because they had no future there under an even more oppressive and feudal system that dominated every aspect of people's lives. Yet, while fleeing this system, many Chinese also carried with them a feudal culture. The much-touted virtues of Confucianism, for example, demanded unquestioning loyalty for superiors while political power was distributed through a system of brokers, through *guanxi* or connections.

The local Chinese were ready clients for politicians like Erap, only too willing to sell their influence to the highest bidders through systems of "commissions" and "cuts." The Erap era set us back, integrating all our structures and institutions—from the stock market to the civil service to the Armed Forces and even to the underworld networks of gambling—into one massive system of patronage and connections, where you were only as important as who you knew.

It is unfortunate that the local Chinese have become so closely associated with Erap's corruption. We have to change this, and this has to begin in our homes and in our schools. If the next generation is to survive in the 21st century, it will have to pick up values of fairness, social justice, professionalism. Teaching these values begins with the simplest of measures within families: not discriminating, for example, between sons and daughters, between *A-hia* (elder brother) and *Sio-be* (younger sister), and between *lan-lang* (our people, the Chinese) and those who are not "our people." It begins, too, with teaching our children there's more to life than earning money, and a discussion of political issues, including the issue of cronyism.

It's time, too, that we project more of Chinese culture other than its feudal aspects, for example, superstitious beliefs that dangle promises of instant prosperity. The Chinese New Year is a good opportunity to discuss some of these beliefs.

You may be familiar with the Cantonese new year greeting "*kung hei fat choy*" which means "wishing you happiness and generating wealth." "*Fat choy*" is to "produce wealth" so a magical application here is to consider any word that sounds like "fat" as wealth-generating. Thus the popularity of the number 8—pronounced "fat" in Cantonese—among the Chinese, who will pay extra to get that digit into license plates or phone numbers.

Sounds quaint, but I'd rather we promote a less simplistic view of good fortune. We can go back to the Cantonese new year greeting and pick out "*choy*," which means wealth. In written form, this Chinese word combines two characters, one for "precious" and one for "skill." In other words, one acquires life's treasures through skill, and I'm translating loosely because "skill" here is not just dexterity but wisdom, quite similar to our Filipino "*galing*."

It might be useful, too, to point out that the Chinese words for greed and for poverty are quite similar. Both words use the character for "precious" as its root, just like in the term "wealth," but greed combines this root with the character for "now" while poverty uses the character "disperse." These Chinese words offer us simple lessons for life: wealth comes from skill; greed, living only for today, drives us to economic ruin. There's a social element to all this—the word for greed is also used to mean corruption. The message is again simple: corruption impoverishes entire societies.

Erap tried to negotiate to leave Malacañang on Jan. 24, which is when this year's lunar new year falls. Erap is known to be terribly superstitious and I would not be surprised if his cabal of fortunetellers told him to hang on, as the new lunar year was going to bring better luck for him. But we should know better: good fortune doesn't come with numbers on license plates or *jueteng*. Neither does it come from "correct" *feng shui* or from auspicious dates. Prosperity comes from hard and honest work, and from *pagbubukas loob*. The Chinese, and Erap, would do well to rediscover Filipino notions of the inner self and how it is nurtured by the generosity of mind and spirit.

I wasn't ready to greet readers a Happy New Year last Jan 1. I am, now.

Comments can be sent to miguel@pinoykasi.org

Wrong English translation

YOU may have made an error in translating to English Rossana Roces' open letter to the President. Instead of using the term "devil's advocate" you probably should have used "devil's aid" or "devil's proponent."

Although advocate does mean helper, here in the United States, "devil's advocate" means the person in a group who takes an opposing view, somebody who may not necessarily agree with what he is saying but still argues a certain way for the sake of debate. (I think Roces was trying to say that the senators were cronies of the President and that they were not disagreeing with him.)

People consider having a devil's advocates very helpful in brainstorming session when a committee is trying to determine adverse effects or repercussions of a certain decision.—**JOSEPH MALLARI, joseph@psionline.com**

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

January 19, 2001

To my fellow Filipinos,

I have been in hiding since I came out as the surprise witness last December 22. However, I have kept in touch with my co-workers at Equitable PCI Bank and I am told that malicious rumors continue to discredit the Bank. I am saddened by the news because it not only affects an institution I have built my career with but also colleagues who are not only my co-workers but also many of whom are my friends.

I am grateful for your support after my testimony on the documents which were subpoenaed and submitted in compliance with the directives of the Impeachment Court. I will be heartened if you will continue to express the same support for the institution that I value dearly. I have been with the Bank for 19 years and I have learned the value of hard work, professionalism, integrity, and loyalty by working in this Bank all those years. There are many countless people in the Bank who believe, as I do, that banking should be governed by these values. It is thus unfair for the stakeholders of the Bank – its depositors, its employees, and clients to suffer unduly because of baseless accusations.

I am also told that certain groups are calling for the boycott of some banks perceived to be crony banks and they have included Equitable PCI Bank. I am saddened by this call as it seems to disregard the role that many of the Bank's officers have taken in the impeachment trial before it was suspended.

Believe me when I tell you that it was not easy to come out to speak the truth, notwithstanding threats to our lives and our families. And it was with the full support of management that we had been able to come out. The Bank provided us with lawyers, security officers, moral and financial support to help us perform our duty to uphold the truth and our duty as responsible citizens. We were allowed to take time off from our busy work schedules precisely to fulfill this duty at the Impeachment Court. If you believed in us and supported us, we hope you will also be unwavering in your support in the institution that has allowed us to fully exercise this duty that has won your trust and belief.

The Bank stood behind my colleagues and me as we contributed to our country's quest for truth. I appeal to you to defend us against malicious parties. Please stand behind the Bank as solidly as you have expressed your support for my colleagues and me.

I pray for all of us and I hope that our country will be better for this.

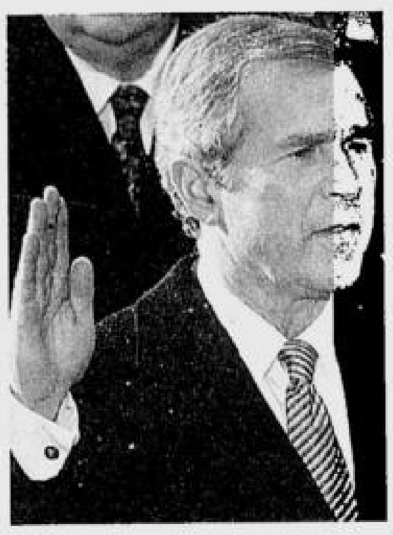
(SGD.) CLARISSA G. OCAMPO

Equitable PCI BANK

The WORLD

MARGOT J. BATERINA, Editor

World sees difference in Bush foreign policy



BUSH

TOKYO—For the past eight years, the world has grown accustomed to an activist US presidency: Bill Clinton's late-night phone calls with overseas leaders, his micromanagement of peace talks, his willingness to engage—for better or worse—in troubles beyond US borders.

Things are likely to be different under George W. Bush.

Now that Bush has taken office, picked his foreign policy and security teams and switched gears from campaigning to governing, analysts and officials around the world are cautiously taking stock of how the new president and his advisers will confront the globe's challenges.

The tentative consensus: Bush's assumption of office heralds a less interventionist American diplomacy, one that is more demanding of allies to solve their own problems and more reluctant to make commitments abroad unless the US stakes are high and the goal is clear.

At the same time, it also foretells a more assertive defensive posture: a harder line against suspected sources of terrorism, for example, and more forceful support for a missile defense shield that many allies—and potential rivals like China—are wary of.

The foremost expectation is that of a more inward-looking America.

"There is the possibility, the likelihood, that President Bush will be more inclined to leave countries to sort themselves out and protect what he sees as directly being American national interests," said George Jones, a professor of government at the London School of Economics.

Bush has said little on foreign policy, so observers abroad have had to divine his direction by his Cabinet choices: Secretary of State nominee Colin Powell is well-known for his reluctance to get involved in foreign crises; National Security Adviser Condoleeza Rice has talked about a "division of labor" with European allies; both Powell and Donald Rumsfeld, nominated as secretary of defense, are staunch supporters of the anti-missile shield.

In Europe, these and other choices could mean the Kosovos of the future will have to be handled with less of a US commitment. In Asia, the Japanese can expect more pressure from Washington to assume a bigger security role in the region, but less pressure on trade. Africans wonder if they'll be forgotten by an administration that stays closer to home, or if they can count on Powell—the first African-American secretary of state—to make the region a higher priority.

Observers, however, have not concluded the new US foreign policy will be one of neglect, and many see advantages to a more hands-off approach. Latin Americans hope Bush will put more emphasis on cutting domestic demand for drugs. Some Europeans say Bush may force their continent to become more independent, pushing the Nato alliance into a more balanced, mature phase. *AP*

WEDDINGS IN THE NEW YEAR REUTERS

According to Chinese custom, engaged couples dream to hold their wedding during the Chinese New Year because of its blessings. In Chengdu city in western Sichuan province, 62 military couples hold their wedding in one of the city streets.

Landslides, quake kill 31 in Sulawesi

JAKARTA—A series of rain-triggered landslides and an earthquake in Indonesia's North Sulawesi province killed at least 31 people, officials said Monday.

Authorities fear the death toll on remote islands in the Sangihe chain, 200 km north of the provincial capital Manado, could rise.

"There are at least five people missing," said Soehardjono, chief of the provincial Department of Meteorology and Geophysics.

Soehardjono, who like many Indonesians uses only one name, said at least three landslides hit villages on the islands late Saturday, burying 31 people.

A magnitude-5.8 quake struck on Sunday followed by several aftershocks, he said.

He said details of the tragedy remained sketchy and that rescue teams had been dispatched to the islands.

North Sulawesi is about 2,160 km northeast of Jakarta.

Flooding and landslides coinciding with monsoon rains killed more than 200 people in Indonesia at the end of last year.

Government officials and environmentalists say deforestation by timber-cutting logging concerns and villagers needing firewood has contributed to the disasters.

Indonesia, the world's biggest archipelago nation, also is prone to frequent seismic upheavals because it straddles major fault lines. Last May, a quake and a tsunami killed 46 people and left 30,000 homeless in another part of Sulawesi island. *AP*

Israel, PLO negotiators start marathon talks as deaths rise

TABA, Egypt—Israeli and Palestinian negotiators began marathon peace talks Sunday in Egypt, but both sides played down the chances of a swift breakthrough against a backdrop of further bloodshed.

With the prospect looming that Israeli hardliner Ariel Sharon may beat Israel's caretaker prime minister Ehud Barak in a Feb. 6 election, the two sides sat down for their biggest peace push since a Palestinian uprising erupted in late September.

Negotiators are expected to discuss a series of peace proposals put forth by former US president Bill Clinton, one day after he left office.

"We must not bury our heads in the sand. The chances of overcoming the differences in the short time we have left are not very high," warned Barak, whose government has been brought to its knees by nearly four months of fighting between Israelis and Palestinians that has claimed the lives of more than 380 people.

The death toll rose again Sunday, with the killing by the Israeli Army of a 15-year-old Palestinian near the Karni border crossing with Israel in the northern Gaza Strip, a frequent troublespot during the intifada or Palestinian revolt.

Top Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erakat, speaking in Gaza, criticized Barak for expressing pessimism, saying he had "condemned the negotiations to failure before they even began."

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, however, expressed guarded optimism, telling reporters he hoped "these negotiations will lead to an agreement as quickly as possible."

The two sides opened the talks at a conference room at a luxury hotel in Taba, a Red Sea resort near the Israeli border. Without explanation, the negotiators then moved to a ninth-floor bedroom where a table had been set up for them to sit opposite one another.

"The best," replied Israeli Foreign Minister Ben Ami when asked by journalists what he expected from the talks.

Ben Ami is heading the Israeli delegation in Taba, while the Palestinian side is led by Palestinian parliament chief Ahmed Qorei, one of the main architects of the 1993 Oslo peace accords with Israel. *AFP*

S. Korea upbeat about Kim Jong-il 6-day China tour

SEOUL—South Korean President Kim Dae-jung ordered his government Monday to work out measures to support North Korea's expected adoption of an open-door policy following its leader's study tour of China's market economy.

"North Korea is expected to push a considerable level of reforms and openness, so we must be prepared for that possibility," Kim said during a Cabinet meeting.

South Korean officials are upbeat about North Korean leader Kim Jong-il's six-day study tour of China which ended Saturday, believing it would lead to the opening of the North's reclusive, communist system to the outside world.

North Korea's open-door policy, they believe, would further boost inter-Korea relations, which already have made significant progress since the two Korean leaders met for the first time in the North's capital, Pyongyang, in June.

Noting that North Korea needs outside help for a successful implementation of its open-door policy, Kim Dae-jung said South Korea should work out measures to encourage that policy.

The South Korean president did not elaborate, but officials said some pending economic projects, including proposed South Korean investment in building an industrial park in the North, may move ahead.

South Korea's Hyundai group last year obtained North Korea's approval to build an industrial park at Kaesung, a major city near the North's border with South Korea.

Hyundai's plan calls for 850 footwear, garment and other labor-intensive South Korean plants to be relocated there. That plan has been held off because of financial and other glitches, including the North's demand for 500,000 kilowatts of electricity a year from South Korea. *AP*

Re-vote expected in Thailand

BANGKOK—Thailand's Election Commission will throw out the results in at least 50 constituencies and order re-voting because of suspected fraud and cheating during the Jan. 6 general election, officials said Monday.

The revote, scheduled for Jan. 29, throws into uncertainty the victory claimed by telecom tycoon Thaksin Shinawatra, whose Thai Rak Thai party won 256 seats in the 500-seat parliament. It was the first time any party had won a majority in general elections.

"The commission is unable to say how many constituencies need re-votes, but what we can say is that the number may range from 50 to 100," Election Commissioner Gothom Arya said.

Other officials in the commission, speaking on condition of anonymity, said reelections may be held in 90 constituencies where the commission found evidence of widespread vote-buying, counting irregularities or other fraud.

Most of the constituencies investigated by the commission are in northeastern Thailand, the stronghold of Thai Rak Thai, or Thai Love Thai, one official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

He said at least 50 victorious Thai Rak Thai candidates may have to face reelection.

Under new election rules, the commission can bar candidates from contesting in the revote if there is clear evidence of fraud against them.

During the past weeks, the commission has investigated 100 candidates, and summoned another 13 today for interrogation Monday.

At least 14 of the 113 candidates are expected to be disqualified and banned from contesting not only the reelections but also any other polls for one year, officials said.

Other officials have said in the past that at least five of the 14 candidates belong to Thai Rak Thai. The names of the tainted candidates will be announced on Jan. 27. *AP*

Nurses want security after wave of attacks

SYDNEY—Nursing staff in remote Aborigine communities must be protected or pulled out after a wave of attacks on nurses in recent weeks, Australia's national nursing union said Monday.

Australian Nursing Federation national secretary Jill Iliffe called for an urgent summit meeting to devise ways to protect nurses in Aborigine communities.

The union was aware of six serious attacks since last November in the Northern Territory, Iliffe said. A gun was pointed at one nurse and another was dragged from her car and beaten.

Nurses are often the only health workers in Aborigine communities in remote outback areas and their withdrawal would leave people without any local health care, the union said. Aborigines have the highest levels of poor health and unemployment in the country.

Paul Nieuwenhoven, a local nursing federation official, said Aborigine communities must help to protect nurses.

"Things have to change—people in Aboriginal communities have to take some responsibility for ensuring the safety of health staff," he was quoted as saying in The Australian newspaper on Monday.

"If this behavior is not curtailed, we will be advising nurses not to go to communities that have a reputation," he said.

The Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance of the Northern Territory warned against blaming all Aborigines for the action of a few people. *AP*

DIE-HARD PATRIOT REUTERS

Notorious East Timorese militia leader Eurico Guterres gestures after his fourth session in a north Jakarta court, Jan. 22. Court judges decided to proceed with the trial, rejecting demands from defense lawyers who said the case should be dropped because of lack of evidence. Guterres has a fanatic group of followers who consider the 37-year-old as a die-hard patriot.

Court dismisses case filed against Suu Kyi

RANGOON—A Rangoon court on Monday ruled in favor of pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi, dismissing a case brought by her estranged brother for partitioning their family property.

The Rangoon Division Court Judge Soe Thein cited procedural errors in throwing out the case filed by Aung San Oo, who wanted the division of the sprawling lakeside property where Suu Kyi lives, now under virtual house arrest.

"This is a correct decision. We are very pleased," Suu Kyi's lawyer, Kyi Win, said.

Aung San Oo's agent, Han Toe, told reporters that he will inform his client, a US citizen who lives in California, about the decision and will follow his instructions. It wasn't immediately clear if he has the option to appeal.

The verdict provides rare good news for Suu Kyi, coming at a time when she has started reconciliation talks with Burma's ruling military junta over their decade-old political deadlock.

A four-member European Union delegation also is expected to meet her and the generals to assess the progress of the talks during its Jan. 29-31 visit to Burma (also known as Myanmar).

The property case was believed to have been filed with the tacit approval of the government. Its dismissal—courts in Burma are controlled by the government—appears to show that the junta is making an effort to keep the atmosphere conducive for the secret talks with Suu Kyi going on since October. *AP*

HONG KONG RELICS

Century-old trams face extinction

HONG KONG—Swaying and trundling between skyscrapers, the smell of dried fish or sandalwood incense wafting into their open windows, Hong Kong's trams are an experience not to be missed—especially now that they appear headed to the junkyard.

The wooden double-decker "ding-ding," so nicknamed for its clanging bell, is to make way for a new generation of streamlined aluminum models, which Hongkong Tramways Ltd. says will be safer, faster and more comfortable.

But its fans, as well as tourism officials, are dismayed at losing a rare symbol of the old in one of Asia's most modern cities.

Hong Kong last tried to get rid of the trams during the 1980s,but officials backed off amid a public outcry.

Not even the allure of air conditioning in the sterile, bus-like new trams impresses Lei Sio-mui, a fashion retailer who says older is better.

"Once it has air conditioning it will lose its character," Lei said. "In fact, I like trams precisely because they feel more airy."

"I really love it," Lei said. "It has an air of nostalgia to it—it would be a real shame if they change it."

Raymond Wong, a 30-year-old accountant, agrees. "There are fewer and fewer memorabilia left in Hong Kong now. They demolish everything," he said.

Hongkong Tramways has launched trials of a "Millennium New Tram" and plans to replace the existing 163 vehicles by 2004—the centennial of tram service.

"We want to present a fresh look," said general manager T.K. Wong.

In its century, the electric tram has tottered along little changed as Hong Kong rose from sleepy British colony to one of the world's leading financial centers.

Hong Kong's public transport system of ferries, subways, trams and buses of various sizes has been praised by experts as one of the world's best, and at 25 cents a ride, the slow but reliable trams, each a riot of advertising colors, are a bargain for quick hops through crowded streets.

It helps for a passenger to be small, because the aisles are narrow and the ceilings low, and it takes deft footwork to burrow down a jampacked aisle, timing one's exit to coincide with paying the fare into a coin box by the driver.

But it's worth struggling up the steep, curved stairway for an elevated view of Hong Kong, or the satisfaction of grabbing a space on the wooden bench below and experiencing the city at ground level.

In a city where buildings are often put up and demolished within decades and companies often spring up and are gone even faster, the tram's perseverance is legendary.

Apart from the largely original bodywork and engines, the tracks have stayed mostly intact while glass-walled skyscrapers have sprung up alongside them in place of Victorian architecture.

Even the land along the tram tracks has changed. The tram used to run along the waterfront of Hong Kong island. Land reclamation has since pushed the coast several blocks northward.

Perhaps in deference to the nostalgia, the tram company will keep the "ding ding" bell and the traditional dark green of the bodywork, but other features will change. The wooden seats, for instance, will give way to gray plastic ones. *AP*

Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

Gloria warned: Keep off Charter

BAGUIO CITY—Lawyers and local government officials here advised the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo against any radical changes in the 1987 Constitution, which they called "the fruit of the first Edsa Revolution."

Lawyer Pablito Sanidad, a private prosecutor in the impeachment trial of ousted President Joseph Estrada, said tinkering with the Charter was likely "should events follow the course tracked in 1986 at Edsa."

But he said most of the opposition lawyers would protect the spirit of the "Edsa Constitution."

"It is never a good time to change your Constitution when drastic and radical changes have just taken place. That might affect the character of the Constitution," Sanidad said on Friday as Baguio residents massed up for a protest rally against Estrada.

Local officials, however, look forward to an "improvement" of the Constitution.

Mayor Mauricio Domogan said the salient features of the Constitution, which the opposition may consider flawed, could be the first casualty in a review by the new administration.

Another casualty may be the provision on the impeachment process itself, another lawyer said.

But Domogan, a lawyer, insisted that the principle of an impeachment process as a means to unseat presidents is legally sound.

"It was only the way it was applied which made it suspect to many Filipinos," he told the INQUIRER.

"But I look forward to improvements in the Constitution, if there are plans to review it," Domogan said.

Sanidad said an immediate change in the Constitution must be discouraged, regardless of sentiments against Charter provisions like the impeachment process.

"I do not advocate changing the Constitution during uncertain times, because there can only be bitter reactions. If ever we should think of constitutional change, it should be after we have successfully established some amount of stability," he said.

Members of women's groups here said they would keep an eye on Ms Macapagal's economic policies.

About 100 women farmers and professionals who met at a forum here on Saturday presented the "women's agenda" in light of Ms Macapagal's assumption to the presidency.

They said Ms Macapagal's policies on globalization and trade liberalization, when she was vice president and senator, had adversely affected the lives of women farmers in the Cordilleras.

The Cordillera Women's Education and Resource Center said 75 percent of the 750,0000 women in the Cordilleras are farmers who belong to different tribal groups.

The Innabuyog, a Baguio-Based women's group, said the policies of globalization and trade liberalization had crippled the region's agriculture with the influx of imported agricultural products.

"We welcome Ms Macapagal as our new president. We know it is an acid test for her to eradicate graft and corruption. But when it comes to economic policies, it is downright scary for her to implement economic policies such as globalization," the women said.

In Pangasinan, the Erap Agco La (Enough of Erap) movement is drafting the "Pangasinan Agenda on Good Government" which will be presented to Ms Macapagal next month.

Lawyer Delmer Cruz, Erap Agco La secretary general, said the group is conducting dialogues with the Church, academe, business and other sectors to finalize the "Pangasinan Agenda." ***Reports from Vincent Cabreza, Desiree Caluza, Yolanda Fuertes and Gobleth Moulic, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

Teacher wins ₱11-M lotto pot

BY VICENTE LABRO
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—Some pundits have predicted 2001 as a year full of intrigues, economic uncertainty and political instability.

But for this 58-year-old teacher, the year started with a wonderful blessing after she won P11 million from lotto.

The teacher became P11,049,630 richer after she won the lotto jackpot during a draw on Jan. 9.

The teacher placed her bet on the combination 09-19-23-30-35-40.

But Zenaida Delantar, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office provincial officer, told the INQUIRER that the winner could not be identified.

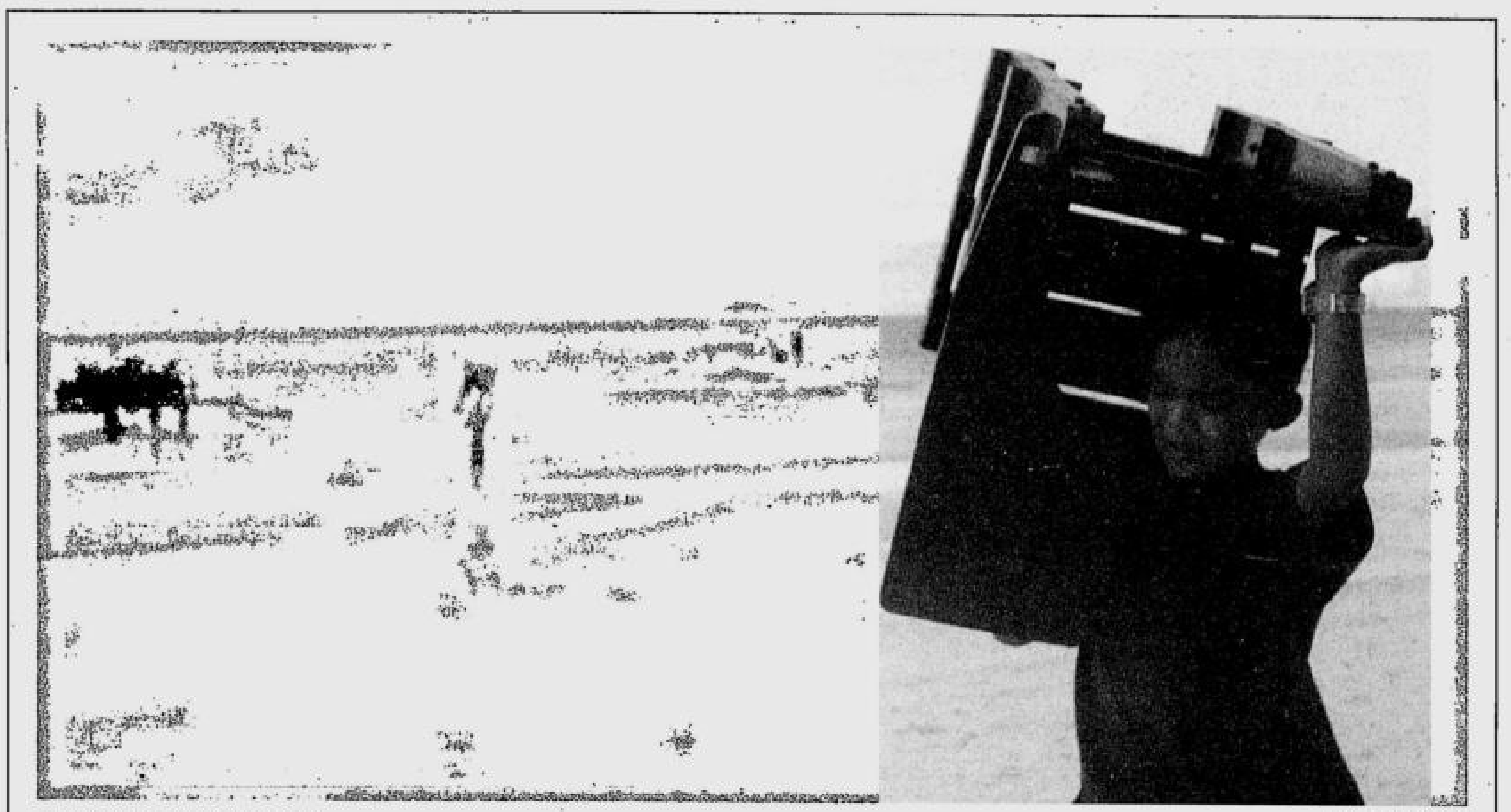
She said the PCSO office here did not really know the identity of the winner. Besides, she added, they do not usually give out the identities of big winners for security reasons.

She said they only knew that the winner came from the region after a congratulatory message was flashed on a lotto machine here on Jan. 10, a day after the winning combination was drawn.

Delantar said the teacher was the first lotto jackpot winner for 2001 in Eastern Visayas and the fifth in the region since 1997 when lotto began its operations.

In Maasin City alone, she recalled, there had been two jackpot winners already.

Delantar said the recent jackpot winner bought the winning ticket from the Miralles lotto outlet near the corner of Rizal Avenue and P. Zamora Street.



SEATS OF LEARNING EDWIN BACASMAS

Learning is a process often made difficult by lack of facilities in many schools in the countryside. In some areas, however, students had learned to find solutions, instead of whining over problems. Such is the case of students in a school on Boracay Island who unload chairs from a motorboat to bring to their facility-deprived classrooms.

14 YEARS AFTER

Justice denied Mendiola carnage victims

BY ROMULO O. PONTE
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

STA. CRUZ, Laguna—"First, a stone was thrown (at) us. Then… gunshots thundered, shortly after, from (the) pistols and Armalite rifles of police and Marine officers directed at us for about five minutes," a Mendiola massacre survivor recalled the tragedy.

Dodoy Julian, one of the survivors, told the INQUIRER on Saturday that seven of the 13 farmers and factory workers who died in that carnage were from Laguna.

They were part of the Southern Tagalog contingent that joined the march-rally to Malacañang on Jan. 22, 1987 to demand genuine agrarian reform, among others.

Julian remembered six of the seven victims from his group: Danilo Arjona of Liliw town; Adelfa Aribe of Sta. Cruz town; Vicente Campomanes, a certain Domanico and one Arao, of Pagsanjan.

A certain Laquindanum, factory worker in the province's first district, also died.

"But 14 years have passed (and) justice has remain(ed) elusive to the… victims of the violence committed by the government (against) its own people," Julian said.

"We salute our fallen comrades who are our modern heroes for the cause of authentic land reform," said Alex Arias, secretary general of the Pagkakaisa at Ugnayan ng mga Magsasaka sa Laguna (Pumalag), during a memorial Mass and prayer for the victims on Jan. 18.

Arias, who also survived the Jan. 22 Mendiola bloodbath, said "history showed that justice for the farmers will only be possible when they themselves would work and fight for it."

Julian vividly recalled his friend Arjona's last words to his wife Tessie: "Don't neglect our delegation so that it will be orderly."

He said Arjona was a security marshall for the rally.

"The military men were so brutal because they were not content with merely firing at (the farmers). They ran after us who were already shocked, battered, (and) fighting for life," Julian recalled.

"We were relieved only when we reached the Manila Cathedral… because the police and the soldiers had stopped chasing us," the survivor narrated.

Arjona's son is now 16 years old and has remained uneducated, a poor farmer like his late father. He continues to struggle, along with fellow farmers, demanding justice and genuine agrarian reform, Julian said.

Arjona's widow now works as a house help, but has not abandoned the struggle, a promise she gave her husband before he died on Jan. 22 14 years ago.

Thank yous echo inside churches

MASSES in Aklan, Negros Occidental and Cebu on Sunday became an avenue of gratitude to God for the peaceful transition of power on Saturday.

In Aklan, Kalibo Bishop Gabriel Reyes transformed Sunday's morning Mass at the Pastrana Park in honor of the feast of Sto. Niño into a Thanksgiving Mass for the successful staging of People Power II at the Edsa Shrine on Saturday.

Reyes said the bloodless upheaval was God's will and done through the intercession of the Sto. Niño, whose feast day falls on the third Sunday of January.

Reyes said Aklan folk should now be serious in personal reforms because the country will attain nothing if the lessons learned from Edsa were forgotten.

He also said the right of suffrage should be exercised with caution to ensure that immoral people are not elected into office.

In Cebu, Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal urged "restraint and patience, not haste for revenge," in the wake of the change in the country's leadership.

Vidal invoked the blessings of the Holy Child for the "newly elected President."

While the Prelate did not say the name of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, he was clearly referring to her when he said: "Even in her smallness, make her big and strong in the courage of her conviction."

"Like a child (Sto. Niño), let us enter, rejoice and come in to His Kingdom and let us tell the world of His love, and of His patience, and not of our haste for revenge," Vidal said during a dawn Mass at the Pilgrim Center of the Basilica del Sto. Niño to commemorate the Feast of the Holy Child.

Vidal, a close ally of deposed President Estrada, was at Estrada's side hours before he stepped down from office.

Vidal, who returned to Cebu on Saturday afternoon, has so far remained mum about what transpired between him and the former President.

In his homily Sunday, Vidal said there are so many reasons for Filipinos to be thankful these days, and having a new administration during the first Feast of the Holy Child in the third millennium is one of them.

"Thank you, Señor Sto. Niño, for the start of a new phase in our society…" Vidal said.

"Let us rejoice and be thankful, for gloomy days have passed," he added.

Messages of gratitude to the Lord also reverberated throughout most of the churches in Negros Occidental Sunday.

Sermons in almost all Catholic churches carried the theme of gratitude to the Lord for the peaceful transition, said Fr. Armando Onion, one of the leaders of the anti-Estrada rallies in Negros Occidental.

He said priests noted in their homilies that the gains won on Edsa in 1986 were lost because of lack of vigilance by the people. ***With reports from Odon Bandiola, Lino Parone and Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau***

New President revives hope for victims of Mt. Pinatubo

SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga—The presidency of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has refreshed hopes for the revival of the Mount Pinatubo Commission and the distribution of free houses and lots to some 55,000 families left homeless by Mt. Pinatubo eruptions and lahar flows in Central Luzon since 1991, a victims' group said Monday.

Ms Macapagal, then a senator, sponsored the bill that created in 1992 the MPC, an interim government agency formed to systematize public and private sector responses to the eruptions of Mt. Pinatubo, which were considered the worst in the world in the last century.

In the middle of the campaign by victims against the commission's usufruct scheme (a system that only allowed the use, not ownership, of houses), Ms Macapagal proposed Senate Bill 2315.

The bill and four other bills that seek to provide either free housing or lots or both to Mt. Pinatubo victims only languished in the 10th Congress, said Frank Mangulabnan, spokesperson of the victims' group Ugnayan.

Although the 11th Congress approved the bill of Pampanga Rep. Oscar Rodriguez to extend by two more years or until 2002 the life of the MPC, former President Joseph Estrada ordered otherwise.

The Department of Budget and Management, which was given the task to oversee an orderly closure, reduced the MPC's workforce from 170 to 65 last December.

The remaining personnel were given three months, but without additional funding, to supervise the construction of the last batch of 1,500 houses.

The MPC was also given until March this year to issue certificates of housing entitlements and allocations to legitimate beneficiaries in 24 resettlements in Pampanga, Tarlac and Zambales, MPC officials said.

The usufruct scheme, which required the settlers to pay an average of P300 monthly but offered no guarantee of ownership after 25 years of amortization, remained unresolved.

The P31.8 billion spent for MPC's relief, rehabilitation and resettlement programs—76 percent of which was released to the commission's partner agencies—had not been fully audited, Lumaban, another victims' group, said.

"There are so many crucial tasks to be done but the MPC was not given enough time to finish its work, especially rehabilitation and resettlement programs," Mangulabnan said.

"We hope, in time, the President would address the concerns of Mt. Pinatubo victims. The victims have high hopes for her now," he said. ***Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

Payumo hit for barring ex-Subic exec's funeral

OLONGAPO CITY—Ferdinand Aristorenas, former chief operating officer of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, did not have a serene burial Thursday last week as tension sparked again between the camps of SBMA Chair Felicito Payumo and his predecessor, Richard Gordon.

The widow, Dely Aristorenas, assailed Payumo for banning the funeral march she wanted held for her husband in the freeport.

Aristorenas, 39, formed the core of young volunteers who turned the former Subic Naval Base into one of the country's leading economic zones. He died Jan. 12 after a heart attack.

Payumo had allowed the Aristorenas family and the Upsilon Sigma Phi fraternity of the University of the Philippines to hold a wake at the SBMA chapel. He, however, restricted the march to specific areas.

The widow cancelled the wake when the original route of the march, which was to end at the Volunteers Park, was changed.

"It was Ferdie's last wish," Dely told the INQUIRER by phone.

Payumo, according to an SBMA statement, did not allow the march to pass through industrial zones because of security concerns.

The freeport was placed on red alert in the wake of protest rallies demanding the resignation of ousted President Joseph Estrada.

"We cannot comprehend how you managed to interject petty political issues in the guise of so-called security concerns (in) the occasion of the untimely demise of my husband," Dely said in a letter to Payumo Jan. 17. ***Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

Mummies in Benguet town baffle experts

BY DESIREE CALUZA
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Officials have yet to take custody of two mummies, which were accidentally found by high school students near a cave in Kapangan, Benguet, in October last year, while they were on a field trip in the area.

The students discovered the mummies in Sitio Balabag Tawang in Barangay Balengbelis in Kapangan.

Kapangan Mayor Eugenio Leon said they failed to identify the origin of the mummies from photographs supplied by the Benguet provincial government.

"Based on the pictures that we saw, we could say that the mummies were half-preserved," Leon said.

The mummies, which appeared to have similar characteristics to the more famous mummies of Kabayan town, were found tucked in a fetal position by students of the Gov. Bado Dangwa Agricultural-Industrial High School.

Leon said he was shocked when he saw the pictures.

"A proper consultation has to be made with the community where the mummies were found. No one claimed they own the mummies. We really do not know if they really came from Kapangan," he said.

Documented evidence of Ibaloi mummification had always been concentrated in the pasturelands of Kabayan, three towns west of the farming town of Kapangan.

Leon, 39, said his father and grandparents never referred to any mummies from Kapangan.

He said stories he encountered about mummification were always related to the Kabayan relics.

He said the only mummification process known to his town involved the relatively modern smoking method, applied in a specialized ritual only for highly revered personalities.

"The last time we encountered this process was in October or November when an 80-year-old *mambunong* (native healer) named Bucaso died. His remains were strapped (to) a high chair and his body was smoked after it was covered with herbs. That is the mummification (process) we are aware of," Leon explained.

Unlike their more famous counterparts in Egypt, the Kabayan mummies appeared to have been mummified with their organs intact.

Research showed that the Igorot ritual uses specialized herbs that are sprinkled on the body, which endures a month-long smoking process. ***With reports from Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

Estrada foes dominate new Cabinet

(From page A1)

have no salary but would take him worldwide to help the Philippines win investors.

Other new appointees were Isabel Golamco, assistant appointments secretary; former Rep. Antonio Gatuslao, presidential assistant liaison officer for the House of Representatives; Antonio Bernardo and Susana Vargas, deputy executive secretaries; and Edgardo Manda, general manager of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

College classmate

Golamco was a classmate of Ms Macapagal at the Assumption College while Gatuslao used to be the legislative liaison officer of the Office of the Vice President (OVP).

Manda was deputy chief of staff of the OVP and a former executive of the Meralco. Vargas was head of the finance division of the OVP.

During yesterday's flag ceremony in Malacañang, Ms Macapagal promised not to undertake a massive purge of the bureaucracy.

She said she also would not repeat Estrada's practice of allegedly favoring rich friends during his presidency.

"I don't have those cronies that I can't say no to. I don't have cronies around me," the President said.

Corona also said the new administration would not follow Estrada's practice of appointing close friends to sensitive government posts.

"'We will not make the same mistakes . . . She has to reach out to all the sectors of society," Corona told a news conference.

But most of the Cabinet members announced so far were either former officials or protégés of Ramos and former President Corazon Aquino, who also led the anti-Estrada protests at the Edsa Shrine, the site of the popular uprising that toppled dictator Ferdinand Marcos in 1986 and brought her to power.

De Villa was the defense secretary of Ramos; Corona, assistant executive secretary; Boncodin, budget undersecretary; Dominguez, presidential assistant for Mindanao affairs; Ermita, a government negotiator with the Moro National Liberation Front.

Former Sen. Alberto Romulo, the first to be named to the Cabinet as finance secretary, served as the first budget secretary of Aquino.

Before her appointment, Garchitorena was Ayala Foundation president and managing director for corporate affairs of the Ayala Corp.

The Ayalas were among the first big businessmen to throw their support behind the multisectoral movement that sought Estrada's ouster.

'Utang na loob'

Corona admitted that *utang na loob* (debt-of-gratitude) was among the factors considered in the appointment of the new set of officials by Ms Macapagal.

"Whom do you get in the Cabinet if not those who shared your principles and values and helped you from the very start," he said.

He said the appointment process would take about two weeks.

ORLY MERCADO—Defense
(until Feb. 12)
GEN. ANGELO REYES—AFP chief of staff
extended for 1 year.
EMILIA BONCADIN—Budget secretary
PAUL DOMINGUEZ-Presidential assistant
for regional development
EDGARDO MANDA-Naia general manager

"The Cabinet change will be slow. We don't want to give the impression of a St. Valentine's Day massacre that just because you served under Estrada, you should be booted out," he said.

The "search committee" is headed by Patricia Sto. Tomas, former civil service chief.

Corona said De Villa's tenure might only be an "interim assignment" should he later decide to run for the Senate.

"De Villa will be leading the senatorial slate of the administration party. I don't know, he might stay on, but the President wants him to lead the slate," Corona said in his first press briefing at the conference room of the Office of the Press Secretary.

"But let us assume that he forgoes his plan to run for Senate, it's not a bad idea of having Secretary De Villa there," Corona said.

Although not a lawyer, De Villa is well qualified for the job, according to Corona.

In Sydney, the Filipino community welcomed De Villa's appointment.

"De Villa's appointment as little president is a clear evidence that the Macapagal administration will be transparent in its transactions because he is known as Mr. Clean," lawyer Ted Aritao and Tony Jalocon said in a statement.

Reyes

Corona said it was likely that Ms Macapagal would honor Estrada's order extending the period of service of General Reyes.

"If that is validly issued, I suppose there is no reason that that should be recalled, considering that the crossing over of General Reyes was really one of the big events that really turned the tide in favor of the new President," Corona said.

He said his role of a spokesperson was only an "appendage" to his post. He said he was not sure if the one to be named press secretary would assume his secondary role.

Corona explained that his job would involve "directing traffic" of documents coming in and out of the Office of the President.

On who will be the next Vice President, Corona said the new administration didn't consider the appointment of a Vice President as a priority "because we are still in a transition stage."

Corona said that at this point, the administration was trying to get all sectors together to help each other. "Appointing a Vice President now from among the many contenders will just be divisive," he said.

The appointment of Roco came as a surprise to many who considered him as a possible Vice President.

"I guess he wanted to try something different," Corona said.

Roco is serving his last term in the Senate.

Health department

Ms Macapagal named Health Undersecretary Antonio Lopez officer in charge of the Department of Health but was reportedly considering the appointment of Mercado's wife Susie.

But health workers, backed by the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, are demanding the ouster of Susie Pineda-Mercado as health undersecretary.

Emma Manuel, president of the Alliance of Health Workers, said her group would formally ask Ms Macapagal not to consider appointing Pineda-Mercado as health secretary.

She said Pineda-Mercado and former Health Secretary Alberto Romualdez were the ones who caused the displacement of hundreds of health workers through Executive Order 102, which seeks to privatize government hospitals.

Some 200 displaced health workers booed Romualdez, one of the few Cabinet secretaries who stood by Estrada to the very end, and Pineda-Mercado as they went through the crowd of protesters at the DOH Compound in Manila.

At the Department of Interior and Local Government, former Interior Secretary Alfredo Lim bid farewell to his subordinates and asked them to support Lina.

Lim's outgoing head executive assistant, Eulogio Magsaysay, said Lina's immediate concern upon assumption of the DILG post would be to "bring back unity among local government officials" who were divided into pro- and anti-Estrada groups.

The DILG had conducted a "loyalty check" among governors when Estrada's popularity took a beating at the height of the "Juetengate" scandal.

Local Government Undersecretary Narciso Santiago Jr., husband of Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, also tendered his resignation. ***With reports from Norman Bordadora and Volt Contreras***

Coup talk rife but Enrile son assures Gloria

(From page A1)

"He's smart enough to know that any untoward action right now will spell the trouble for this country."

The young Enrile said the rumors were mainly spread through text messaging.

He also said that his father had decided to leave the Senate and run for the House of Representatives for the seat in the first district of Cagayan.

The young Enrile said he had already offered his post to his father and that he would not run for any post in the next election

Downplayed

When told about the alleged coup plot, Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado, acting Philippine National Police chief Leandro Mendoza and presidential spokesperson Renato Corona downplayed the threat.

Mendoza said they did not expect a disturbance from supporters of Estrada.

In Camp Aguinaldo, members of the elite Counter-Terrorists Force of the Armed Forces of the Philippines as well as Scorpion Tanks and V-150 armored vehicles were parked at the camp's grandstand for quick deployment if needed.

Even the Rebolusyonaryong Alyansang Makabansa (RAM) noted that it was keeping its ears to the ground as pro-Estrada groups might try to recruit its members.

"There's still that danger," said RAM spokesperson, retired Navy Capt. Proceso Maligalig. "They might try to recruit mercenaries and even criminal elements," he said.

Mercado quickly doused talks ranging from the movement of troops from Northern Luzon to alleged secret meetings by members of Class 1971 of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) to which former PNP Director General Panfilo Lacson and Honasan belong.

"If the air is full of talks about a coup, there won't be a coup," Mercado said. "We have not received any report indicating there will be such an attempt."

Consolidated

Mercado said both the AFP and PNP had been consolidated in support of the Macapagal presidency.

"We're in no danger of a counter-coup," he said.

Maligalig said he received reports from an eyewitness that a busload of armed men were seen Sunday night near the residence of Estrada on Polk Street in Greenhills, San Juan.

Maligalig also noted reports of meetings by pro-Estrada quarters, which have influence over certain sectors in the AFP and PNP.

"I have transmitted these to the group handling the security of President Macapagal and they are checking it," he said.

But Maligalig noted that a counter coup would be extremely unpopular and would be resisted by the people.

"It's easy to draw a plan but you have to have men, arms communications and the question is who will lead it and when," he said.

RAM, which was involved in six coup attempts against the Aquino administration, is a divided organization.

Honasan, a former leader of RAM, cast his lot with then President Joseph Estrada while other leaders joined the movement calling for Estrada's resignation.

Brig. Gen. Jaime Canatoy, chief of the AFP Civil Relations Service and a member of PMA Class 1971, said their class was supporting Ms Macapagal, Estrada's constitutional successor.

Canatoy denied that members of his class were meeting either among themselves or with Estrada to discuss plans of toppling the new administration.

"Her presidency is constitutional, that we firmly believe," Canatoy said. "That counter-coup is not true."

He said members of the PMA Class 1971 were already senior officers and their retirement could be placed in jeopardy if they were to undertake illegal moves against the Macapagal administration.

Erap withdrawal of $3M alarms gov't

(From page A1)

freeze order.

The legalities prevented the freezing of Estrada's Citibank account at the close of banking hours yesterday.

"We are calling on people power to stop it today," said an ally of former President Fidel Ramos.

Malacanang also said it cannot just freeze or sequester the assets and deposits of the ousted president.

According to Renato Corona, spokesperson and chief of staff of newly installed President Macapagal-Arroyo,

"Under a democratic system, only a court can issue a writ of attachment," Corona said yesterday, adding that the situation now was different from 1986 when the Aquino administration took over after the toppling of the Marcos dictatorship.

"This is not a revolutionary situation. Only one person was ousted," Corona said.

He said that the criminal cases filed by various private groups against Estrada would prosper at the Office of the Ombudsman, and that the Office of the President could not dictate on the latter.

At a press conference, Ombudsman Aniano Desierto announced that he had ordered the forming of a "special preliminary investigation panel" and directed it to investigate all the respondents in the "Juetengate" scandal, "but this time to include the former President."

Desierto said Estrada "now stands accused of plunder, graft, malversation of public funds, falsification of public documents, bribery, unexplained wealth and violation of Republic Act 6713, which pertains to the failure to disclose true statement of assets and liabilities."

The charges were contained in six complaints earlier filed by, among others, three lawyers' groups and the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption.

Desierto also said that if the complainants requested it, the hearings would be open to the public.

Money laundering

The new chief of the Philippine National Police, Deputy Director General Leandro Mendoza, warned that Estrada and his cronies could evade charges of money laundering because of the absence of a law covering that offense.

In a news conference yesterday, Mendoza called for "stiffer laws," including one covering warrantless arrests, that he said would enable the police to aggressively go after erring government officials.

Asked if there was basis to arrest and file charges against Estrada and his cronies in connection with the alleged laundering of millions of pesos from "jueteng" collections, Mendoza said: "We may have firearms, we can declare red alerts, but our hands are tied. There is no law on money laundering. Therefore, Mr. Estrada and his cronies may be able to get away with money laundering." Estrada was said to have accepted P200 million in jueteng money to fund the Erap Muslim Scholar Foundation that used to be headed by George Go, former president of the Equitable PCI Bank.

It was in that bank that the supposed P3.3-billion "Jose Velarde" account was deposited.

Mendoza, a member of the Philippine Military Academy Class 1969, expressed frustration over "lenient" laws.

"Look, the PNP is in quandary. Unlike the military, we cannot even detain an erring subordinate even if he was caught red-handed," he said.

Graft, plunder

Corona said the lawyers' groups that filed the graft and plunder cases against Estrada, including CLEAR (Confederation of Lawyers for Erap's Abrupt Resignation), would make sure that the cases would be tried at the Ombudsman.

He said the President could not interfere in these cases because these were filed by private groups and individuals before the Ombudsman, an office independent from the Office of the President.

"Technically, there is really nothing that the Office of the President *per se* can do about it," he said.

CLEAR yesterday called for the creation of special courts that would try and prosecute the plunder and graft cases against Estrada.

Its spokesperson, Leonard de Vera, said it would present to Congress a draft bill for the creation of additional divisions in the Sandiganbayan to try cases involving the ousted president.

Earlier, Corona said former Executive Secretary Edgardo Angara relayed Estrada's wish that he "be cleared of any liability for whatever he has done."

Corona added: "Another demand was for President Estrada to keep possession of all the mansions, all the cash, all the assets that he has accumulated, including those of his mistresses or wives.

"Also, he wanted an iron-clad guarantee that he will not be prosecuted, and that no cases will be filed against him."

Panel members

Desierto said he had designated the members of the special preliminary investigation panel that would look into the cases against Estrada and company, as well as the criminal cases against Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis Singson et al.

He named Overall Deputy Ombudsman Margarito Gervacio as panel chair, and as members, Andrew Ammuyutan, chief of the Ombudsman legal department, Pelagio Apostol, chief of the Preliminary Investigation Bureau, and Emmanuel Laurezo and Jose de Jesus Jr.

Desierto said the panel had been directed to complete its work and submit its report within 60 days, but vowed that the investigation would be completed sooner.

Desierto asked the Senate impeachment court to furnish the panel all the documents and evidence submitted by the prosecution, as well as all pertinent records.

He said that if sufficient evidence were found to indict Estrada, he would initiate criminal proceedings before the Sandiganbayan.

Plunder, considered a heinous crime, is punishable by death.

War crimes

In Davao City, Moro and human rights groups urged the President to pursue the filing of cases of rights violations and war crimes against Estrada for initiating war against Moro rebels in Central Mindanao.

Evelyn Carias, chair of the Khadidja Moro Women, said it was holding Estrada directly responsible for the destruction of Moro-dominated villages in Central Mindanao and other parts of the island and for the deaths of civilians in the evacuation centers.

"Our people are crying for justice. Our people suffered the most under the Estrada administration because of that senseless all-out war he waged against the Moro people," Carias said.

At least half a million people were displaced by the war. Thousands of families have yet to return to their villages. ***With reports from Christine Herrera, TJ Burgonio, Andrea T. Echavez; Jowel F. Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Veep search sparks . . .

(From page A1)

Pimentel resigned as Senate president on Jan. 16 after voting, along with Roco, Drilon and seven other senator-judges in the impeachment court, to open an envelope containing documents related to then President Joseph Estrada's alleged hidden wealth.

Under the Constitution, the President can choose the Vice President from among members of Congress. The nominee shall assume the post upon congressional confirmation.

Msgr. Ray Monsanto, vicar general of the Archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro City, said he would be proud if President Macapagal-Arroyo nominates Pimentel, a native of the city.

In Davao City, Archbishop Fernando Capalla said Pimentel was "not only capable but also morally commendable."

Joji Ilagan-Bian, chair of the Mindanao Business Council, described the senator as "the epitome of a Mindanaoan."

"He symbolizes the pioneering spirit of the Mindanaoans, as shown by his not allowing himself to be influenced by the decisions of others and doing what he sees is right," Bian said.

Bian said Pimentel's appointment as Vice President would boost efforts to check underdevelopment in Mindanao because he would serve as the "Mindanaoan's voice" in the "halls of power."

Rey Magno Teves, president of the Mindanao Coalition of Development Non-Government Organizations, said Pimentel would provide "good balance" to Ms Macapagal because of his principled politics and long involvement in the struggle for better government.

Alvin Luque, secretary general of the militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan), said the alliance welcomed Pimentel's appointment as he has a good track record.

Prof. Moner Bajunaid, chair of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front's committee on the peace process, said it would be a "welcome development."

Pimentel had earlier told journalists in Manila that he was not interested in the vice presidency because of *delicadeza*.

He said he did not want people to think that his vote on the envelope and his resignation as Senate president were made out of a desire to become Vice President.

Yesterday, he said, "I will act when the formal offer is done, not before."

"This is classic move of my father. He is very careful that people would misunderstand him," Pimentel's son Aquilino III had earlier said.

The young Pimentel had said he hoped the President and the new leadership would be able to persuade his father to change his mind. "If it is good for the country, why not?" he said.

Iloilo son

Iloilo Vice Gov. Remy Sonza said Drilon was qualified to be Vice President, having served as Senate president and Cabinet member in the past.

Under the Aquino administration, Drilon was appointed labor secretary (1987-90) and executive secretary (1991-92). He was justice secretary (1992-95) during the Ramos administration.

"Up to this day, Senator Drilon remains as the Ilonggos' best hope for the vice presidency. It can be a way of saying that the Ilonggos are partially fulfilling their dream," Sonza said. "We have yet to see an Ilonggo president."

Vice Mayor Roberto Armada, president of the Vice Mayors League of the Philippines-Iloilo chapter, said Drilon made the Ilonggos proud.

Drilon could have opted to stay with the Estrada administration, Armada said, but the senator put his career on the line when he called for the ouster of Mr. Estrada.

His resignation from the ruling Lapian ng Masang Pilipino in November cost Drilon the Senate presidency. He was replaced by Pimentel.

"The President is from Luzon, the Senate president is from Mindanao. I feel we should divide regional powers by having Senator Drilon as Vice President," said Sally Zaldivar Perez, a native of Antique and presidential legislative assistant of the Senate.

"That way, the first three highest positions in the country will represent the three major islands. Wouldn't that be nice?" she said.

A native of Molo, Iloilo City, Drilon finished his elementary education at the Baluarte Elementary School and his high school education at the University of the Philippines in Iloilo City.

Like Pimentel, Drilon is also mum about his decision if the vice presidency is offered to him.

Bicol

Bicolanos from all walks of life are pushing for the appointment of Roco, who hails from Naga City.

"It's about time that a Bicolano be placed at the helm of government to bring about progress in Bicol and the country," said Ronaldo Llamera, a law student of Aquinas University in Legazpi City.

"I will accept if (the position is) offered," Roco said in Manila. He placed third in the 1998 presidential elections, running under the Aksyon Demokratiko party.

Many government workers interviewed by the Inquirer at random said Roco was the most qualified, noting that he is articulate, very objective, has no biases and stands for the truth during trying times.

Other candidates

Senators Teofisto Guingona Jr. and Loren Legarda-Leviste, who also voted for the opening of the controversial envelope in the impeachment trial, yesterday expressed openness to serve as Vice President if asked.

"I don't know (if I will be asked) but if I am offered, I will humbly accept. In my record as public official, I humbly accept any challenge that comes my way," said Guingona, who hails from Agusan del Norte.

Guingona, head of the Lakas-NUCD, said the selection should be a priority, especially if the person will be given a concurrent Cabinet position as announced by Ms Macapagal.

Legarda-Leviste, who reaped praises for her performance in the impeachment trial, said it was Ms Macapagal's right to appoint the most qualified and the one she was comfortable with as her No. 2.

"It's a prerogative of the President, but I guess all of those being mentioned are open," she said. ***Reports from Froilan Gallardo, Edwin O. Fernandez, Jowel F. Canuday, Carolyn O. Arguillas and Joselle Badilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Raj Padilla and Hazel P. Villa, PDI Visayas Bureau; Rey Nasol, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; and Juliet Labog-Javellana in Manila***

Estrada: Gloria only 'acting president'

(From page A1)

temporarily unable to discharge his powers as President, and that Ms Macapagal was only "acting President."

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, a fierce Estrada ally, openly questioned the legitimacy of Ms Macapagal's assumption of the presidency, saying "she is only acting President or a full President by virtue of a *coup d etat*."

Renato Corona, the new President's spokesperson and chief of staff, was annoyed when asked about the legitimacy of the Macapagal administration.

"You saw the entire Supreme Court there during the oath-taking. What more evidence do you want?" Corona said at a press briefing.

"We are a regular constitutional government. Why do you have to be hampered by a piece of paper which we know is going to come out in a few days, anyway?" he said.

Corona was referring to the Supreme Court *en banc* resolution Saturday that declared the presidency vacant.

The tribunal issued the resolution yesterday confirming "the authority given by 12 members of the court" Saturday to Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. to administer the presidential oath of office to then Vice President Macapagal.

In issuing the resolution signed by Assistant Clerk of Court Ma. Luisa D. Villarama, the tribunal said it was acting on Ms Macapagal's "urgent request," addressed to Davide, to be sworn in as President.

The tribunal stressed that its decision was made "unanimously."

Unable

The one-paragraph letter states: "By virtue of Section II, Article VII of the Constitution, I am hereby transmitting this declaration that I am unable to exercise the powers and duties of my office. By operation of law and the Constitution, the Vice President shall be acting President."

It was signed "Joseph Ejercito Estrada" without the designation President and contained a "PJEE Hologram # 22743."

A copy of the letter was also transmitted to the House of Representatives.

According to Senate Majority Leader Francisco Tatad, what the letter meant to him was that "we are still in a period of political instability."

Even Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr., who received the letter as well as a copy of the Supreme Court resolution, said it was a "constitutional challenge" to Ms Macapagal's assumption of the presidency.

Pimentel said Estrada was saying he might move to reclaim the top post.

The letter, which Pimentel received at 8:44 a.m., was referred to the committee on rules chaired by Tatad.

Both Tatad and Pimentel told reporters that Senate Minority Leader Teofisto Guingona Jr. would file a resolution expressing the Senate's formal recognition of the legitimacy of Ms Macapagal's oath of office.

The resolution had yet to be filed at press time. Guingona said it was still being circulated for signature.

Guingona described Estrada's letter as a desperate move to hang on to power.

Corona said that if the letter were genuine, Estrada was "pitiful (*kawawa naman siya*)."

"Why then did he leave (Malacañang) last Saturday?" Corona said.

At his regular press conference, Tatad said: "Well, as you very well know, pieces of paper right now have no real force. A political position coming from anyone must be backed by popular support, civilian and military, as we saw on Edsa on Saturday."

He said the Macapagal administration could just "disregard" Estrada's letter because it was now the one in control.

Foiled

At the House, pro-Estrada lawmakers foiled an attempt by minority members to change the leadership of the chamber.

Speaker Arnulfo Fuentebella banged the gavel at around 4:10 p.m., signaling that the session had been adjourned for lack of quorum.

"They were preempting a House leadership change . . . There were more than 80 members on the floor. The session should have been merely suspended . . . It was unusual," said minority member Iloilo Rep. Raul Gonzales.

Ilocos Sur Rep. Salacnib Baterina aired a similar view, but added: "This can be considered a period of mourning for the majority. They have to adjourn to lick their wounds."

Agusan del Norte Rep. Roan Libarios and Bukidnon Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri Jr. said the minority had the numbers and had planned to install former Speaker Manuel Villar in place of Fuentebella, who assumed the post only on Nov. 13.

"We have more than 100 congressmen," Libarios said.

Zubiri said there was a need to consolidate all levels of the government for the new President. "There are groups out to destabilize her (administration) by claiming that President Estrada is only on a leave of absence," Zubiri said, referring to Estrada's letter. "They will try to retake Malacañang. We'll counter that by taking over all levels of the government."

Questionable

Maguindanao Rep. Didagen Dilangalen said Ms Macapagal's oath-taking as President was "questionable."

He said the Supreme Court had practically declared Estrada incapable of discharging his functions as President.

But it was not the tribunal that should declare the incapability of the president, he said, adding that it must be the President or the Cabinet members who should do so.

But Makati Rep. Joker Arroyo said Dilangalen was a mere case of sour grapes. He said the Maguindanao congressman should "think of more sensible things" and "respect change."

Referring to the letter, Arroyo said Estrada was not getting the right legal advice.

"He's a lonely man, a former President without any advisers, so he makes mistakes," Arroyo said.

Unsettled

Santiago said the oath administered by Davide to Ms Macapagal at the Edsa Shrine "merely allowed (her) to assume the presidency but did not settle the issue of the status of her administration as President."

"For this issue to be settled, a petition should be filed in the Supreme Court," Santiago said.

Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, another Estrada ally, said the support of the military, police, Congress and the Supreme Court appeared to be "enough basis" for Ms Macapagal "to exercise the powers and to discharge the duties of President."

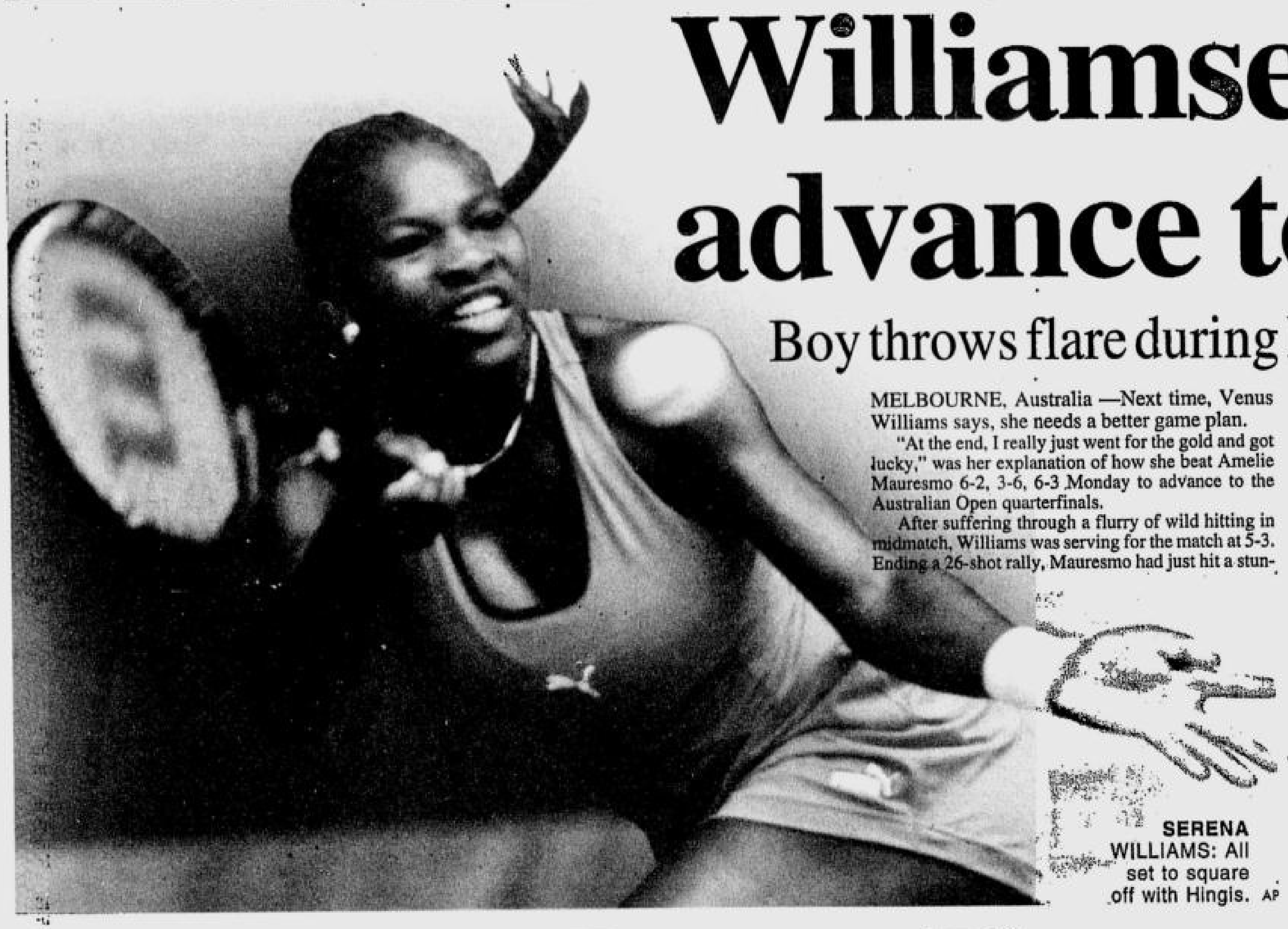
"I do not want to discuss the events that happened. President Arroyo is established already," Enrile said.

In a move to permanently settle the "constitutional legitimacy" of Ms Macapagal's assumption of the presidency, the Movement for National Security Advancement (MNSA) yesterday asked the high court to "resolve all legal insinuations that her administration is de facto and extra-constitutional, if not unconstitutional."

The petition, filed by 14 officers and members of the MNSA, sought "to put an end to this legal confusion, settle this constitutional uncertainty, avoid further legal complexities and establish judicial precedent for guidance of future generation." ***With a report from Rocky Nazareno***

Williamses, Hingis advance to q'finals

Boy throws flare during Kournikova doubles match



SERENA WILLIAMS: All set to square off with Hingis. AP

MELBOURNE, Australia —Next time, Venus Williams says, she needs a better game plan.

"At the end, I really just went for the gold and got lucky," was her explanation of how she beat Amelie Mauresmo 6-2, 3-6, 6-3 Monday to advance to the Australian Open quarterfinals.

After suffering through a flurry of wild hitting in midmatch, Williams was serving for the match at 5-3. Ending a 26-shot rally, Mauresmo had just hit a stunning backhand down the line for a break point.

Williams, the Wimbledon, US Open and Olympic champion, came back with a forehand winner and two aces.

"I guess we weren't really sure about what we were going to do," said the No. 3 seed. "I'd better walk out with a better game plan next time."

Williams' younger sister, Serena, was more overpowering in a 6-2, 6-2 victory over Daja Bedanova, the 17-year-old Czech who had knocked out Olympic silver medalist and US Open semifinalist Elena Dementieva.

Top seed Martina Hingis, the most prominent obstacle to a Williams sisters semifinal, advanced to a quarterfinal meeting with Serena by beating Rita Grande 6-0, 6-3.

With nearly 6,000 people watching a doubles match involving Anna Kournikova on Court 1, play was briefly interrupted when a 15-year-old boy threw a smoking orange flare on the court. Security apprehended him.

"I was hitting the ball and suddenly something dropped in front of me," Kournikova said. "I just walked away."

A streaker interrupted one of Kournikova's doubles matches at Wimbledon last year.

Venus Williams received plenty of help from 1999 Australian runner-up Mauresmo, who committed 44 unforced errors to 43 by Venus in the 1-hour, 41-minute slugfest.

Venus charged the net against Mauresmo's first serve of the match and took the point with two quick volleys. She stayed in command long enough to break serve in the second set's third game.

Then she lost serve in a game with six errors, including two double-faults, and was broken again to give Mauresmo a 4-2 lead thanks to four more errors, including her seventh of 10 double faults for the match.

Venus broke in the final set's second game, was broken back in the seventh and gained her decisive break for 5-3, setting up the "going for the gold" finish.

Next up for Venus is No. 10 Amanda Coetzer, a 6-1, 6-4 winner over Argentina's Paola Suarez.

"I've been through a lot of ups and downs in my career," Venus said. "I know how to deal with certain situations. Luckily enough I was able to pull through."

In the second set, Venus said her sister said, "'Come on Venus, do your best.' That really helped out a lot."

Venus and defending champion Lindsay Davenport, the No. 2 seed, were mentioned when Hingis was discussing possible obstacles to her first major tournament title in two years.

"There is Serena, too," Hingis said of the sister who is seeded sixth and beat her in the 1999 U.S. Open final.

Serena has lost only 19 games in four matches here so far, but Hingis has lost only 12.

"I think if I'm playing well, I have the chance to beat anybody out there," said Hingis, who beat Serena 6-4, 7-5 in the quarterfinals of a warm-up tournament two weeks ago.

In men's matches, Olympic gold medalist Yevgeny Kafelnikov, the 1999 Australian champion and last year's runner-up, solved the left-handed serves of Sweden's Andreas Vinciguerra and won 7-5, 7-5, 6-1.

The No. 5 seed advanced to a quarterfinal with No. 15 Arnaud Clement, a 6-3, 6-2, 7-5 winner over Greg Rusedski, the man who knocked out top seed Gustavo Kuerten. *AP*

Delays mar Batang Pinoy sports tourney in Laguna

BY JUNE NAVARRO

JESSIE Calinao of Cadiz City (left) throws a left straight at Nino Tubigon of Zamboanga del Norte during their boxing elimination bout. Calinao won on points.
ROMY HOMILLADA

STA. CRUZ, Laguna—Twice shelved, the Philippine National Youth Games-Batang Pinoy Championships suffered another hitch as majority of the individual events were rescheduled today due to the inability of organizers to put their act together.

Save for boxing, the centerpiece event of athletics and gymnastics will make their debut today as athletes set to compete in these events are itching to strut their wares in search for the first gold medal of the games at the San Luis Recreational Educational and Sports Village here.

Swimming also endured a minor setback when a swimmer from Cagayan Province suffered from an acute urinary track infection. Clarissa Madriaga, 11, was rushed to the Sta. Cruz Doctors Hospital on Sunday because of high fever.

Cagayan officials said Madriaga, billeted with more 200 athletes from Region II in the Sta. Cruz Central School, complained of dizziness which prompted them to seek medical help.

Commissioner William Ramirez, overall director of the event, said the Philippine Sports Commission will take care of Madriaga's hospital bills.

Action in football, little league softball and baseball, to name a few, started as the 3,651 Batang Pinoy delegation ballooned to more than 5,000 yesterday.

As a result, track and field competitions were squeezed to four days with three golds at stake at the newly renovated San Luis track oval. Medals in shotput, baseball throw, and girls' long jump will be up for grabs.

Gymnastics takes off today at the San Luis basketball gym offering gold medals in the team and all-around championship. Chess will also make its coming out party at the Sta. Cruz town hall.

In another development, Pasig boxers were barred from competing after missing the scheduled official weigh-in and physical examinations Sunday. They were eventually allowed to compete after boxing chief Manny Lopez upheld Pasig's request for a reconsideration.

Football entries were also questioned as the Tawi-Tawi football team appeared to be quite over the prerequisite age of 12 years old as attested by the booters' height and features. Football director Edward Magallona, however, came to their rescue, saying the booters were properly screened before the screening committee.

In little league boys' baseball, Camarines Norte blanked Negros Occidental, 7-0, while Naga shamed Nueva Vizcaya, 12-1. Laguna trimmed Misamis Oriental, 3-0, and Cotabato blasted Nueva Viscaya, 12-1, in girls' softball.

Meanwhile, burglars ransacked the rooms of Management Information System officials at the Hotel La Corona in nearby Pagsanjan town. According to MIS chief Melanio Santos Jr., the robbers struck before his staff went back to the hotel at 7 p.m. and carted away P74,000 worth of cash and valuables.

DLS Zobel heads field joining Luzon soccer

SIX teams, led by three-time national champion De La Salle Zobel, will vie for honors in the all-Luzon finals of the 17th Coke Go-for-Goal under 16 football tournament starting at 1 p.m. today at the Philsports field in Pasig City.

Coached by Hans-Peter Smit, the NCR (National Capital Region) titlist DLSZ booters are heavily favored in the tourney sponsored by Coca-Cola with Adidas as official ball.

The other contenders are P. Guevarra National High School of Laguna, Sto. Domingo High of Albay-Legaspi, Pines City National High of Baguio, Masbate National Comprehensive High of Masbate and Tanay National High of Rizal.

As hosts, the DLSZ boys will play in the opening game which kicks off after the brief opening ceremony.

Philippine Football Federation president Rene Z. Adad, PFF general secretary Chris Monfort and NCRFAA persident Santiago Elizalde will be guest of honor.

DLSZ has beefed up its roster with some players from Ateneo de Manila, Southridge and Don Bosco Makati.

The top two finishers in the event will advance to the nationals set Jan. 29-Feb. 2 in Bacolod City.

DLSZ bagged the national title three times—in 1988, 1991 and 1992.

Altuz derby starts

CHUCK Berry of Oklahoma, in partnership with lawyer-sportsman and derby host Ram Lopez, leads a tough field of more than 40 participants as the "3rd Ucap/ Altuz 6-Cock Derby" gets going at Mandaluyong Coliseum beginning at 7 p.m.

Berry will test the mettle of his Irish Whitehackle breeders, which he will also field in the upcoming Mandaluyong 9-Cock International Derby on Jan. 30, Feb. 1 and 3 hosted by businessman Vic Yu and sponsored by Pagcor-Casino Filipino and Sagupaan Super Feeds.

For other inquiries, please contact 747-4797, 534-4110, 531-4003 and 531-4005.

WIRE-TO-WIRE WIN

Faxon cruises to 4-shot victory; Lehman 2nd

HONOLULU —Brad Faxon's pure putting stroke made his wire-to-wire victory in the Sony Open look easy. It might come in handy at Augusta National, too.

Faxon took a big step toward getting into the Masters _ his top priority this year _ by closing with a 5-under 65, which included two 30-foot (9-meter) birdie putts that kept him in control and his fourth eagle in as many days.

"Everything went my way this week," Faxon said.

Faxon finished at 20-under 260, which tied the record score at Waialae Country Club. John Huston had a 260 in 1998 when the course played as a par 72.

Tom Lehman got within one stroke after six holes, was even par on the back nine and finished four strokes back after a 66. Els had a 69 and was three more strokes back, his third straight week in contention without a victory to show for it.

It was the eighth career victory for Faxon, and the $ 720,000 check was the largest in his 17-year career.

This victory came with some perks.

Faxon, who faced getting shut out of the Masters for the second straight year, should get enough points to move into the top 50 in the world ranking. All he has to do now is stay there for the next six weeks.

His second victory since July _ he won the B.C. Open after failing to qualify for the British Open _ also gets him into the U.S. Open. He also moved up to No. 8 in the Ryder Cup standings.

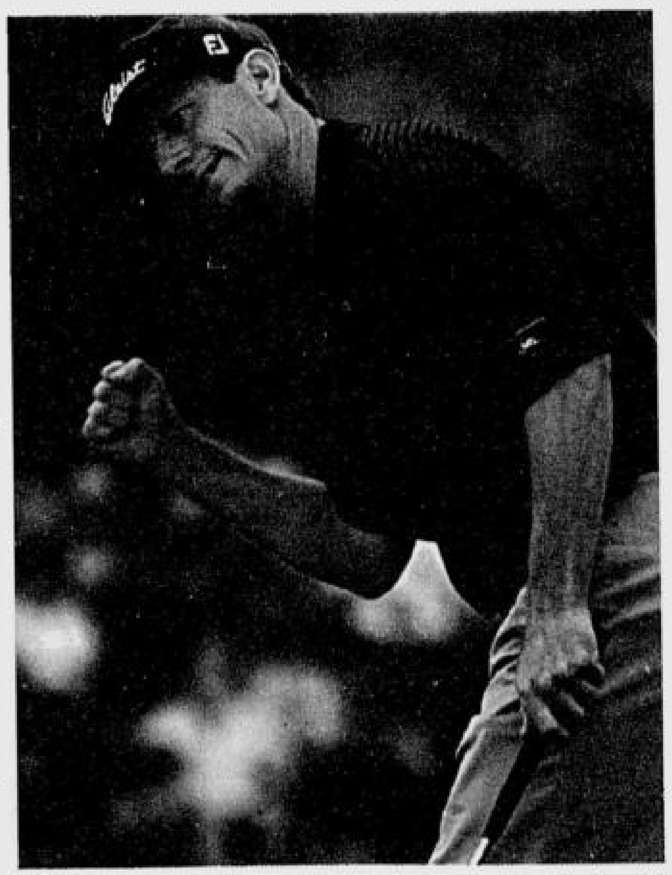
Faxon also got some redemption at Waialae, having lost in a four-hole playoff to Jim Furyk in 1996. A playoff never entered anyone's mind Sunday, not the way Faxon broke the spirit of Els and Lehman with a 90-foot (27-meter) chip for birdie on the second hole, and a 30-foot (9-meter) birdie putt on No. 8 after Lehman had hit his approach to within a foot (30 centimeters).

Billy Andrade had a 65 and finished fourth. *AP*

Gustafson prevails

NAPLES, Florida—Sweden's Sophie Gustafson won the Subaru Memorial of Naples, closing with a 2-under-par 70 for a three-stroke victory over Australian star Karrie Webb.

Gustafson, who earned $ 150,000 Sunday for her third victory in nine months, had a 16-under 272 total on The Club at The Strand. She tied the tournament record set by Meg Mallon in 1999.



FAXON pumps his fist after birdieing the 16th hole. AP

Charity golf at F. Hills set Jan. 29

THE LA Salle Green Hills Alumni Association (LSGHAA) will be hosting the 9th "Drive for a Cause" golf tournament on Monday, Jan. 29, at the Forest Hills Golf and Country Club in Antipolo.

Committee chair Peng Perez de Tagle said that tee-off time is 7 a.m.

The awarding will be held at the La Salle Green Hills Alumni Homecoming on Saturday, Feb. 3, hosted by the La Salle Green Hills Alumni Homecoming on Saturday.

Proceeds of the event will benefit the La Salle Green Hills Adult Night High School, which has graduated over 5,000 students from the generous support of the tournament's sponsors over the years.

For more information please call Ms. Ludie Bautista at tel. no. 721-2729.

This tournament is open to all La Salle Alumni and is sponsored by Forest Hills Golf and Country Club, Union Bank Visa, Smart Communications, Romago and others.

Football telecast

NATIONAL Sports Grill brings the thrill and excitement of American football to Manila as it opens its doors for Super Bowl Breakfast on Monday, Jan. 29, when the Baltimore Ravens and New York Giants clash.

Fans can view the action live from the Raymond James Stadium in Tampa Bay, Florida through NSG's three-sided Jumbotron.

NBA ROUNDUP

Raptors thwart Iverson, 76ers, 110-106

PHILADELPHIA—Vince Carter scored 39 points and Toronto Raptors overcame Allen Iverson's 51 points and two big deficits to rally past Philadelphia, 110-106, in overtime in the NBA Sunday night.

Iverson returned to the lineup after missing Friday night's win against New Jersey because of a bruised left knee. He shot 20-for-40 and scored all 10 of the Sixers' points in overtime.

Toronto won its third in a row and stopped Philadelphia's five-game winning streak.

The Raptors used a 21-0 run as it rallied from a 20-point halftime deficit. Trailing 93-83 in the fourth quarter, they scored 13 straight points.

In overtime, the Raptors took a 105-100 lead with 2:22 left. Iverson then went the length of the floor for a fastbreak layup and, after a foul shot by Toronto, he made a tough jumper from the lane to pull the Sixers within 106-104 with 42 seconds left.

Alvin Williams and Carter came back with jumpers to clinch it for the Raptors.

Pacers 87, Knicks 74

Jalen Rose shot 10-for-14 from the field and scored 24 points, and the Indiana Pacers showed that they, too, can play some dominating defense in an 87-74 victory over the New York Knicks.

Reggie Miller added 18 points, Travis Best had 16 and Jermaine O'Neal 14 for the Pacers, who shut down two-thirds of New York's main offensive weapons by holding Allan Houston to 12 points and Glen Rice to two.

Wizards 94, Hawks 90

In Washington, Richard Hamilton scored 29 points and Juwan Howard had 25 as the Wizards ended a nine-game losing streak.

Jazz 109, Suns 98

In Salt Lake City, Karl Malone scored 30 points and Greg Ostertag had a season-high 15 to lead the surging Jazz over the Suns, who were missing Jason Kidd.

Bryon Russell, in his second game since returning from an injured ankle, scored 15 while Donyell Marshall had 14 and John Stockton added 13 points and 10 assists for Utah, which has won five of its last six games.

Rodney Rogers scored a season-high 27 points for the Suns, and Cliff Robinson added 20.

The Suns opened a six-game road trip without Kidd, the All-Star and U.S. Olympic team point guard who is mending his family life after being accused last week of hitting his wife at their suburban Phoenix home.

Heat 103, Lakers 92

In Los Angeles, Eddie Jones had 26 points and eight rebounds against his former team, and Anthony Mason scored 19 of his 23 points in the second half as Miami won for the 12th time in 16 games.

Kobe Bryant had 34 points and eight rebounds and Shaquille O'Neal finished with 31 points and eight rebounds for the Lakers, who lost for the fourth time in 15 games.

Complete results: Indiana 87, New York 74; Washington 94, Atlanta 90; Toronto 110, Philadelphia 106, OT; Utah 109, Phoenix 98; Minnesota 96, Vancouver 94; Miami 103, L.A. Lakers 92; Milwaukee 102, Detroit 98; Golden State 94, Boston 91; Seattle 109, Sacramento 107. *AP*

Rotary 5th leg on tap

MORE than 100 players, including celebrities, guest and Rotarians are competing in the UCPB-5th Leg District 3610 Governor's Cup to be held Wednesday at the Orchard Golf and Country Club in Dasmariñas, Cavite. Tee time is 7-9 a.m.

The tournament coincides with the Chinese New Year. The host are the Rotary Club of Pasay Mia, Rotary Club of Uptown Manila and Solid Cavite Clubs. Modified Blind Callaway will be used as its format.

Other sponsors are Birch Tree, Ford Makati, SYM Mitsukoshi, Boysen and Primal Enterprises Corp.

Hole-in-one prizes are at stake in all par-3 holes aside from other prizes.

Jun B PSA guest

BASKETBALL officials, led by PBA commissioner Jun Bernardino, MBA chief Ogie Narvasa and BAP chair Lito Puyat, will grace today's resumption of the weekly PSA Forum at the Holiday Inn. Bernardino will talk about the PBA's 27th season set to start this Sunday; Narvasa will brief the media on MBA's April opener; and Puyat will discuss BAP's program.

SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ■ EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

PBA, others back Jalasco

By Dennis U. Eroa

FREDDIE Jalasco's loosening hold on the Basketball Association of the Philippines presidency tightened again yesterday after getting the backing of the leaders of the country's three major cage leagues.

This developed as commissioners Jun Bernardino (PBA), Chino Trinidad (PBL) and Ogie Narvasa (MBA) threw their support behind Jalasco's leadership which has been buffeted by dissent and power struggle.

"Mr. Jalasco will call the shots for Philippine basketball," said Trinidad, who attended the two-hour meeting with his fellow commissioners at the Edsa Plaza Hotel.

Also present was former BAP and ABC secretary-general Mauricio 'Moying' Martelino.

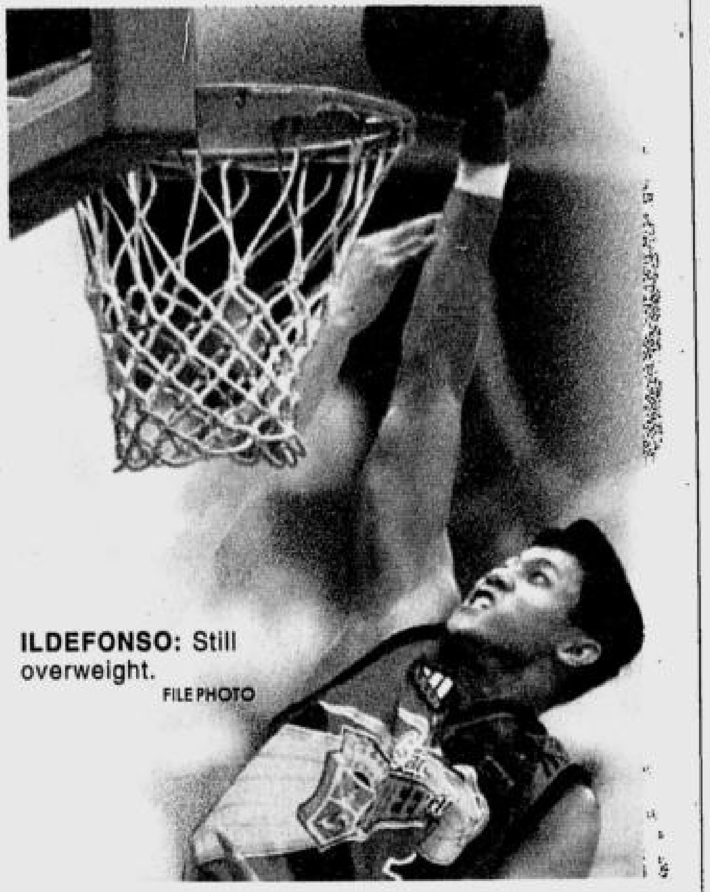
To assure broader consultation, Jalasco will appoint Trinidad, Narvasa and Bernardino to BAP positions with Martelino as adviser. The new group will also include the UAAP and the NCAA in charting the future of Philippine basketball.

Trinidad said the move will "put stability" to Philippine basketball. "We're talking here of funding, training and the forming of the national team. This means a national team acceptable to all."

The immediate concern is the Southeast Asia Basketball Asssociation, the National InterCollegiate and the 2001 SEA Games slated September in Kuala Lumpur.

Trinidad said the national team under coach Boyzie Zamar may have a slight revision since the SEA Games will run in conflict with the MBA schedule. "But nothing is definite yet. For one, we don't want to rock the boat."

Tiny Literal, a former national player during his heydays, headed a faction of the BAP which booted out Jalasco during a special meeting in Angeles City recently. Literal was elected by 19 national board members who had broken ranks with Jalasco.



ILDEFONSO: Still overweight.

FILE PHOTO

Ildefonso joins SMB practice

By Marc Anthony Reyes

DANNY Ildefonso has started practicing with San Miguel Beer in a show of good faith despite the ongoing contract negotiations where last season's MVP is asking for a three-year contract.

Though the Beermen have shown willingness to give the 6-foot-6 slotman a long-term contract, Ildefonso is just asking for a short one like Danny Seigle, who recently signed up for a one-year extension.

Sources said Ildefonso doesn't want to follow the skyrocketing contract inked recently by Kenneth Duremdes with Alaska Milk.

Ildefonso's camp has asked for the maximum salary in each of the three years plus bonuses for won-games worth P20,000 that increase from elimination, quarterfinals, semifinals and championship.

There will also be bonuses for him each time San Miguel reaches the finals and Ildefonso wins individual awards, according to the source.

However, Ildefonso won't ask for extra allowances during out-of-town games and practices like what Alaska granted to Duremdes.

SMB coach Jong Uichico said Ildefonso showed up Sunday and yesterday to join the rest of the Beermen in preparation for the PBA 2001 season which starts on Sunday.

He said Ildefonso's presence signified the Millennium MVP's intention to stay with the Beermen, whom Ildefonso helped win four titles during the past five conferences.

"He's a bit out of shape, but the important thing is that our team is now complete," said Uichico, who added that the Beermen are prepared to give Ildefonso whatever length of term he wishes.

Uichico had earlier said Ildefonso is expected to get the maximum P500,000 monthly pay considering the player's importance in the franchise's record-breaking performances the past two seasons.

Uichico also said they have signed draftee Joey Mente and free agents Arnold Gamboa and Henry Fernandez to complete the lineup.

Meanwhile, Benjie Paras has agreed with a five-year contract with Shell Velocity that would give him the maximum salary aside from the opportunity to become part of the coaching staff after three years.

In other developments, Pop Cola is reportedly claiming its right of first refusal over Bonel Balingit in a bid to trade the San Juan Knights center for Bong Hawkins.

Dear Gloria

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

IF WE BELIEVE that an injustice has been committed, inflicted on us, let's fight it. Silence means accepting the injustice. Tyrants usually succeed because of our indifference, if not deafening silence.

That's why my command: Proceed, Chino. Go for it. Rage against that GAB decision declaring the PBL a professional league.

Chino here is Chino Trinidad, commissioner of the Philippine Basketball League (PBL).

You see, Chino has been doing well despite being the league's head for only about a year and a half. His dynamism has given the PBL a new direction. Pursuing the vision of his predecessor (Yeng Guiao) that the league is the answer to the woes plaguing amateur basketball, Chino has instituted radical reforms toward that end.

First, Chino invited the country's colleges and universities to join the PBL while their cage leagues are off.

What a great act, indeed.

It not only gave our players from the campus the much-needed exposure to tougher battles but also the chance to add excitement to the PBL.

Also, don't we love to say that sports drives away drugs?

With our student-cagers being kept busy virtually all year round, thanks to the PBL, aren't we concretizing the call to help put an end to drug addiction in schools?

Second, not only did the PBL invite schoolteams to join the PBL. It also formed the youth tournament called the PYBL, which assembled many schools in association with commercial establishments to put up a cagefest of their own.

Despite all these positive developments at the PBL backyard, the GAB still managed to sneak in a bomb aimed at the youthful Chino.

What a shame.

Just when the kid was doing all the right moves, the government suddenly steps in and does the most incorrect move aimed at maiming, if not totally killing, the PBL.

Thus, 17 years after its birth, the GAB suddenly discovers that the PBL is a professional league.

Something's wrong somewhere.

I was told that dirty politics played a key role here. And I'm inclined to believe that. As I've always believed, if we allow politics to intrude into sports, our sports world is doomed.

But, yes. Chino and Dioceldo Sy, the PBL chair, did the right move. They went to Malacañang to seek redress. For, indeed, declaring the PBL a professional would derail the status, if not the future, of the student-cagers. If not reversed, the PBL will die a natural death since cagers from the schools have become the bulwark of the league's existence not only today but, more importantly, also tomorrow.

Will Gloria GA, the new tenant at Malacañang, allow an institution in sports cascade into the dustbin of history just because of a decision that was flawed from the start?

Madame President, your move.

Shark eyes finals berth

GAMES TODAY
(Makati Coliseum)
3:30 p.m.—Welcoat vs Montaña
5:30 p.m.—Shark vs Ateneo-Pioneer

LEADER Shark Energy Drink seeks a return to the finals as it battles Ateneo-Pioneer today in the PBL Challenge Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

Looking formidable, the Energy Drink Kings eye the clinching 11th win which will give them the first slot in the best-of-seven championship series.

"This is a big opportunity for us. We must not let this one escape," said Shark coach Leo Austria, who is still looking for his first-ever PBL title.

The Shark-Ateneo-Pioneer tiff is set at 5:30 p.m., followed by the 3:30 p.m. encounter between Welcoat Paints and Montaña Pawnshop.

Shark was originally slated to meet Hapee Toothpaste last Saturday but the game was postponed due to People Power 2. The game will be held on Saturday.

A victory by Welcoat will also move the Paintmasters to within a win of entering the finals. Welcoat swept Shark, 4-0, in the Chairman's Cup.

Chester Tolomia, Roger Yap, Egay Echavez and Gilbert Malabanan are tormenting Shark's defense with their heady plays. *Dennis U. Eroa*

PBL gets support

THE PHILIPPINE Basketball League expressed gratitude over the growing support to its crusade against the Games and Amusements Board's ruling that the league is professional.

Lito Mendoza, team manager of NCAA champion St. Benilde, was the latest supporter of the crusade, saying that declaring the PBL as professional will deprive their basketball program of long-term goals for development.

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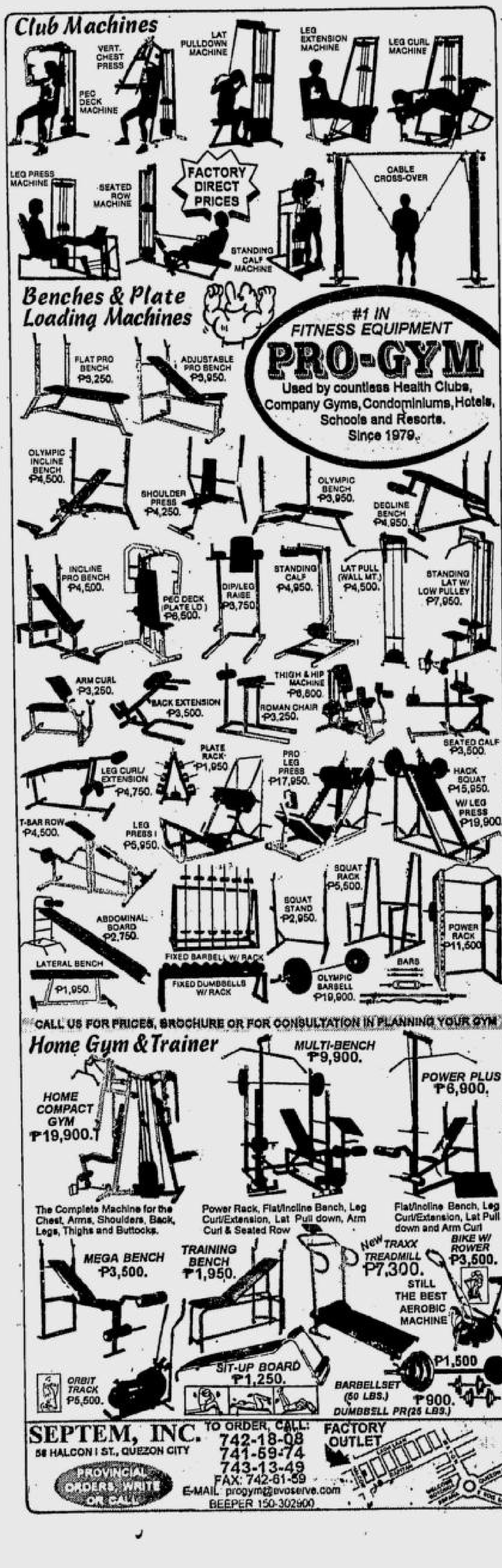

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- **Daboy not quitting race despite Estrada downfall** A16
- **Man stabs vendor dead and walks away smiling** A16

METRO
LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Mister Donut not Mr. Enrile's

MISTER Donut, one of the fastest growing fast-food chains in the country, yesterday denied allegation spreading through text messages that it is owned by Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile. The denial was in response to calls from some quarters to boycott Mister Donut on the accusation that it is owned by Enrile. Ramcar Group stated that Enrile has never been a stockholder, a franchisee or the owner of Mister Donut.

Militants 'sequester' Boracay mansion

By Philip Tubeza

SANLAKAS members "sequestered" yesterday the infamous Boracay mansion in New Manila and urged the new administration to immediately arrest ousted President Estrada.

"The people hope for reconciliation, but they hunger for justice even more. Erap and his accomplices committed more crimes against the people than Leo Echegaray," said Sanlakas president Wilson Fortaleza.

About 30 Sanlakas members posted symbolic "sequestration orders" yesterday on the main gate of the Boracay mansion, said to belong to Estrada's mistress, Laarni Enriquez.

Fortaleza said the prosecution of Estrada and his cronies would be a litmus test for the Macapagal administration to determine if it is really pro-poor.

"Now that Gloria is at the helm, the burden of proof is on her. She should prove us wrong and show that she is a better alternative to the corrupt regime of Erap and the rotten political system in the country," Fortaleza said.

He said he and his group were alarmed at reports that Ms Macapagal allegedly made a secret deal with Estrada for the smooth transition of power.

"It would be a dirty deal with the old regime and a sin against the people if it were true," he said.

"Instead of serving justice first, Gloria's camp is now busying themselves in dividing the spoils of the Estrada administration, while the 'sipsips' and 'balimbings' are jockeying for positions," Fortaleza added.

Residents of Payatas in Quezon City also joined Sanlakas in the rally at New Manila to demand that all Estrada's alleged mansions be sold to fund socialized housing projects for the urban poor.

"We will soon be out of Payatas. This is our chance to get a better life," said Alma Fernandez, of Phase III, Barangay Payatas, Quezon City.

She said Payatas residents did not want to be relocated to Rodriguez, Rizal because the site lacks basic necessities like water and electricity.

"The people there can't find jobs and so they just come back to Payatas to earn a living," Fernandez added.

Sanlakas would also go to the PCI-Equitable branch in Greenhills, San Juan today to symbolically withdraw the controversial Jose Velarde bank account, Fortaleza said.

SANLAKAS
SEQUESTERED

SANLAKAS members hope to sell the palatial house reportedly owned by Estrada mistress Laarni Enriquez and use the money to fund socialized housing projects for the urban poor.

Reject Atienza, KMU asks voters

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

THE KILUSANG Mayo Uno yesterday asked voters in Manila to dump Mayor Lito Atienza in the May 14 election allegedly for "not cooperating" with the people at the height of the anti-Estrada protests.

Crispin Beltran, KMU chair, did not elaborate on how Atienza was "uncooperative," but KMU organizers said it had something to do with the mayor's refusal to issue rally permits in Manila.

Atienza was also accused of restricting movement of demonstrators who were calling for the resignation of the deposed president.

Beltran said Atienza tended to slam anti-Estrada groups and supported the violent rallies of the pro-Estrada group People's Movement Against Poverty at Don Chino Roces (Mendiola) in the dying days of the Estrada administration last week.

"It's also possible that he used public funds in the pro-Estrada rallies," Beltran said.

The KMU also called on the electorate to reject former Sen. Ernesto Maceda, former executive secretary Ronaldo Zamora and former press secretary Ricardo Puno Jr., who "lied and maligned the opposition and all its supporters in defense of Estrada."

"The people must completely squash the political ambitions of such traitors," Beltran said.

Beltran likewise criticized the retention of Orlando Mercado as defense secretary, saying Mercado was very active in the campaign to sabotage the movement to oust Estrada.

Mercado has said he was running for senator in the next elections.

"Where were these politicians when they were needed in the fight to oust the Estrada government?" Beltran said. "Now they're all jostling for a place in the Macapagal administration."

"It's shameful," Beltran said yesterday during a rally at the Don Chino Roces Bridge (Mendiola Bridge) to commemorate the 14th anniversary of the Mendiola Massacre during the Aquino administration.

In 1987, anti-riot squads under then Western Police District chief Alfredo Lim violently dispersed protesting farmers at the bridge, killing 13 of them.

In 1999, a peasant group filed murder charges against Lim and former President Corazon Aquino before a Quezon City regional trial court. But the judge dismissed the case when he ruled that the 10-year filing period had lapsed.

Atienza, a known Estrada supporter, is expected to seek reelection in a three-cornered fight on May 14. He's expected to be challenged by Interior Secretary Alfredo Lim and former First Lady Imelda Marcos.

Lim, also a former mayor of Manila, earlier vowed to retake the city from Atienza, his vice mayor from 1995 to 1998.

Lim endorsed Atienza's mayoralty bid in the 1998 election, but their relationship turned sour when Atienza criticized Lim's administration during the campaign.

MAYOR Atienza and deposed President Joseph Estrada leave Malacañang in this file photo.

'Dirty Harry' goes for it

By Volt Contreras

LIM

NEVER mind the loud boos he got from Edsa Shrine crowds last Friday.

Former Interior Secretary Alfredo Lim is determined to seek another term as mayor of Manila, hoping that his one-year service under ousted President Estrada has not hurt his chances.

Lim served as Manila mayor from 1992 to 1998 before he ran and lost in the presidential elections.

Bidding farewell to Interior department personnel in a flag-raising ceremony yesterday, Lim told reporters that he would decline any offer to remain in the Macapagal Cabinet in whatever capacity "because I'm running in Manila."

Even if Estrada was not kicked out of Malacañang, Lim had already made up his mind to resign as Interior chief not later than Feb. 8 to file his candidacy in the May 14 polls, according to a close aide.

The 71-year-old Lim was earlier forecast in the Social Weather Stations survey to win against likely mayoral rivals, namely, the incumbent Lito Atienza and former First Lady Imelda Marcos.

Manila first got to know Lim as its tough police chief in the late '80s, a local ``Dirty harry" character known for his unorthodox anti-crime methods. He later headed the national Bureau of Investigation, before winning two successive terms as Manila mayor from 1992 to 1998.

Lim was among the members of the Estrada Cabinet who resigned at the climactic hours of People Power 2, hours after the military withdrew its support from Estrada.

The crowd booed Lim when he showed up at the Edsa Shrine to signify his abandonment of the deposed President, who appointed him Interior chief on Jan. 8 last year.

Anti-Estrada critics trained their guns on Lim shortly before the impeachment trial began in December last year, when he accepted an order from Estrada to investigate the so-called presidential mansions.

Lim eventually cleared Estrada of any wrongdoing in the mansions probe.

Lim also drew flak from human rights advocates in his early days in the department when he revived his spray-painting campaign marking the houses of convicted, arrested or known drug dealers.

Newly installed president Macapagal has appointed Laguna Gov. Joey Lina as Lim's replacement in the Interior post.

Why Lacson was nearly beaten up

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

I HAVE no love lost for resigned Director General Panfilo Lacson, former Philippine National Police chief, but what disgruntled police officers did to him last Saturday was dishonorable.

If not for the intervention of the proverbial cooler head, Lacson would have been beaten up by former Constabulary Col. Billy Bibit and Senior Supt. Eduardo Matillano. Lacson was on his way to submitting his courtesy resignation to newly installed President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo who was at the Linden Suites in Ortigas Center.

If they had lost respect for Lacson, they should at least have respected his position as PNP chief. Technically, at that time he was still the national police chief as his resignation letter still had to be received by the new police and commander in chief.

* * *

What made matters worse is that two of Lacson's assailants were his fellow cavaliers. Former Constabulary Colonel Billy Bibit and PNP Senior Supt. Matillano are both graduates of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA). In fact, Matillano was Lacson's PMA classmate.

Matillano and Bibit were not acting like officers and gentlemen. They have disgraced their alma mater.

A fellow PMA graduate, who did not want to be identified, hit the nail in the head with this comment: "They were acting like privates, lowest rank members of the military, and not like the officers that they are."

* * *

Reports said Lacson was visibly shaken by the incident. If not for retired Gen. Renato de Villa, Lacson would have been beaten to a pulp by Matillano and Bibit. De Villa pacified the two.

The "baby face" Lacson is more of a cerebral than a physical guy. He's a thinker, not a doer. He would order a subordinate to execute a criminal rather than do it himself.

Lacson would slink away from a confrontation with his equals. He's so used to having subordinates do the fighting for him.

* * *

What's this I heard that Chief Supt. Florencio Fianza went to the office of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF) in Camp Crame and took over it without orders from higher-ups?

Until recently, Fianza was not holding a responsible position because he was sacked by Lacson for playing golf during office hours.

Fianza is reportedly very close to President Macapagal Arroyo.

* * *

Even if he received orders from higher-ups to take over PAOCTF, Fianza should have begged off from carrying out the order.

Fianza's son was arrested and detained by PAOCTF agents for alleged involvement in big-time car thefts or "carnapping," as they say in police parlance.

Fianza should not give people the impression that he wants to get even with policemen who arrested and detained his son.

* * *

Going back to Lacson, many police generals and colonels were gloating over the news that he was nearly assaulted.

"He was arrogant, he didn't care about the feelings of his subordinates, he played favorites, he thought he had a monopoly of honesty," said a PNP general.

Lacson surrounded himself with bootlicking subordinates at PAOCTF which he also headed in a concurrent capacity. PAOCTF was considered a Gestapo unit within the PNP, doing the same functions as the PNP. In short, it was a PNP within the PNP.

* * *

Lacson was so arrogant, according to his fellow generals, he didn't care about the adverse publicity about him.

The young-looking 53-year-old former PNP chief reportedly once said no amount of adverse reports about him would make deposed President Estrada replace him.

Lacson held Erap by the balls, according to subordinate generals.

This perception was bolstered by an incident at the Manila Hotel where Lacson reportedly kicked the chair reserved for Mr. Estrada during the launching of the police fund drive. The President snubbed the affair because Lacson undertook the drive without informing him.

For a while Lacson was out of Mr. Estrada's graces. But they soon kissed and made up.

* * *

Since President Macapagal does not have skeletons in her closet, unlike her predecessor, she can afford to make the PNP high command toe her line.

Ms Arroyo should not have any spoiled brat like Lacson in the PNP. I heard that Fianza is beginning to act like one when he "raided" the PAOCTF office.

This early, the President should carry a big stick in dealing with the undisciplined PNP.

* * *

The President made a brilliant choice when she appointed Deputy Director General Leandro Mendoza as PNP chief vice Lacson.

Leandro is respected by his peers and subordinates because he respects them. Lacson was not respected, he was feared.

It was Mendoza who took over Camp Crame while Lacson was in Malacañang during the height of the People Power II revolution at Edsa.

When Lacson got to Camp Crame, Mendoza told him to join the PNP which had already withdrawn its support for Mr. Estrada.

"If you don't join us, we'll have you arrested," Mendoza reportedly told Lacson.

Wazzzzup?!!

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Binay, aides maul anti-Erap workers

BINAY

By ALCUIN PAPA

METRO Manila Development Authority (MMDA) chair Jejomar Binay and his aides allegedly attacked and beat up anti-Estrada Makati office workers in last Friday's pro-Estrada rally.

Three persons accused Binay and his aides of attacking them after the MMDA official was irked by the "Erap Resign" and ``Binay Resign" chants of office workers on Ayala Avenue.

Noli Soriano, 30, a faculty member of the Wesleyan University in Manila and a resident of Sampaloc, said he was standing in front of the Makati Sky Plaza building at about 2:30 p.m. and chanting anti-Estrada slogans when one of Binay's aides, identified as Lito Glean and said to be Binay's chief security officer, approached him and suddenly punched him in the chest.

Soriano said he called out to members of the Makati police, who were just beside him, to arrest Glean, but Binay himself approached. He said Binay was only going to talk to him.

Before he knew it, Soriano said he was attacked until he was slumped to the ground as blows continued to rain on his body.

"There were many of them who beat me up. But I am certain Binay was one of them," Soriano told the Inquirer.

Soriano said he is wondering why members of the Makati police, who were near him, didn't lift a finger to stop the attack.

He said he immediately went to the Makati Medical Center for treatment and reported the mauling to the Makati police.

Soriano showed this reporter bruises he suffered in different parts of the body after the beating, and his broken eyeglasses.

A female employee of a bank on Ayala Avenue also accused Binay and his aides of beating her up during the protest rallies on Friday.

The woman, a Makati resident who did not want to be named, said she was standing in front of the Rufino Pacific Tower at the corner of Ayala Avenue and Herrera Street and was chanting anti-Estrada slogans and giving the thumbs-down sign at pro-Erap ralliers, including Binay.

She said Binay was walking along Ayala Avenue away from Paseo de Roxas when he suddenly confronted her.

She said Binay told her in an angry voice to stop chanting anti-Estrada slogans to the pro-Erap ralliers and to respect their rights because it was their day. The woman said she told Binay, "Then let's respect each other's rights."

She said Binay then warned her that she could get hurt if the pro-Erap crowd would get fed up with her. She said she interpreted this as a threat but Binay turned his back and walked away as other employees booed him some more.

A few seconds later, the woman said one of Binay's aides, later identified as Glean, approached her and said, "She was the one who started this."

She said she then felt a slap on the left side of her cheek, and was then knocked on her head with a closed fist. Another snatched her cell phone, the woman said.

But her attackers fled when security guards from a nearby building came to her rescue, the woman said. She said she immediately went to the Makati Medical Center for a checkup and reported the mauling to police. She also showed this reporter a fading bruise on her left cheek.

Norvi Victoria, 30, of Bulacan and an employee of an office at the Rufino Towers said he saw the woman being slapped. He said that few seconds later, he saw aides of Binay turn on the other male employees in the crowd, including himself.

Victoria said one of them confronted him and tried to punch him in the head and stomach, but he evaded his blows. He said that when he saw another aide approaching, he quickly ran toward the nearby Ayala Life building.

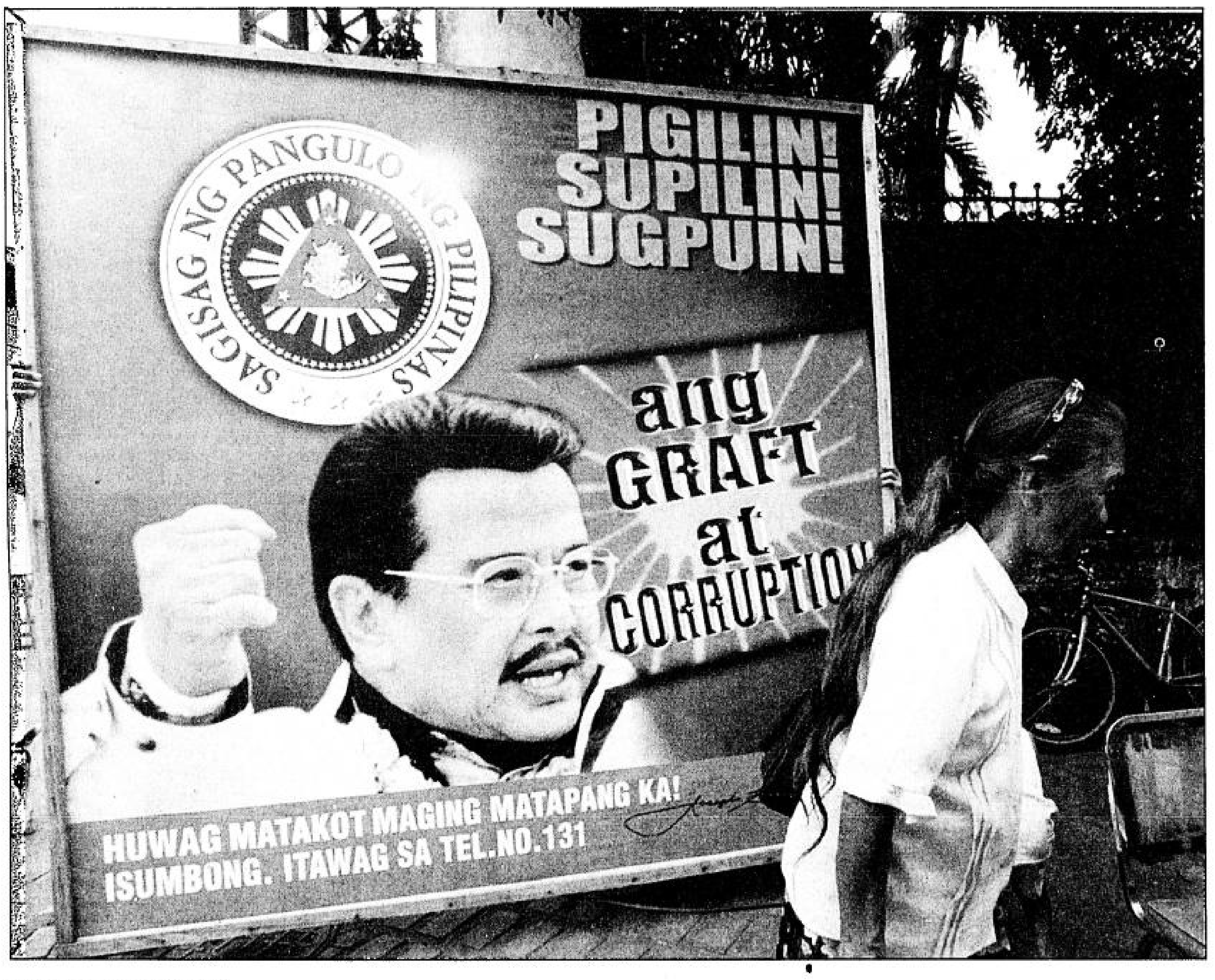
"It looked like they had every intention to beat everyone up. They had no intention to talk to us in a peaceful manner," Soriano said.

"Binay was definitely abusing his power. And to think he is a government official. We thought he was educated and a known human rights lawyer. But now, he is a human rights violator," said the woman.

Both the woman and Soriano said they would file charges against Binay.

"That's the only way to correct the impression that all government officials are like him. We should not allow Binay to be in government again."

Binay was not available for comment yesterday. His secretary said he was in a meeting.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TO THE MUSEUM?

Suddenly this screaming billboard, torn down from outside Malacañang, is rendered useless by last week's successful People Power 2 Revolt.

Man stabs vendor dead and walks away smiling

By Alcuin Papa

FRUIT dealer Norberto Parto met a senseless death early yesterday morning when a suspected drug addict killed him in Muntinlupa City.

Witnesses said that after stabbing the vendor dead, the unidentified suspect simply walked away with a smile on his face and still holding his bladed weapon dripping with blood.

Parto, 37, of Lobo, Batangas, was stabbed six times at the Alabang Public Market about 3 a.m. yesterday.

According to SPO1 Cris Veluz of the Muntinlupa Police Criminal Investigation Division, Parto went to the market, accompanied by Gerardo Manalo and Eduardo Enriquez, at about 10 p.m. the other night to deliver bananas.

While waiting for market vendors, Parto and his companions decided to get some sleep inside their jeepney (DMT-383) which was parked nearby, police said.

A few hours later, the unidentified suspect suddenly boarded the jeepney and started to stab the sleeping Parto repeatedly, police said.

Shocked, Manalo and Enriquez fled on foot to escape the rampaging suspect.

Police believed that the suspect might have been high on illegal drugs at the time of the killing.

Wayward jeepney kills worker, son

By Philip C. Tubeza

A LABORER and his 3-year-old son were killed and four others were injured when a jeepney that was backing up bumped them in Caloocan City yesterday.

Laborer Carlo Niebre and his son Marvin, of 5609 Pili St., Sto. Nino, Camarin, Caloocan, were killed after the jeep (with Plate No. 545) driven by Luisito de Luna, of 130 2nd St., 9th Avenue, Grace Park, Caloocan City, bumped them, said Supt. Victor Carlos Ronquillo, Caloocan Traffic Enforcement Unit chief.

Those injured included Carlo's wife Margarita, 37, their year-old son Michael; and Evelyn Serrano, 37, of 5606 Zapote St., Sto. Nino, also in Camarin, and her 5-year-old son .

The accident happened around 11:30 a.m., on Pili Street, in Barangay Sto. Nino.

The Niebre family and the Serranos were standing in front of their homes when the jeep hit them. The victims did not see the jeep coming because they had their backs on it, police said.

De Luna was driving upwards on the ascending Pili Street when a tricycle blocked its path.

The driver stepped on the break but this move also turned off the jeep's engine.

Daboy not quitting race despite Estrada downfall

FERNANDEZ

By Andrea Trinidad-Echavez

NOTHING can stop actor Rudy Fernandez from joining politics, not even the ouster of Joseph Estrada from power.

A close Fernandez aide yesterday said the action star remained undaunted by the downfall of Estrada, who was thrown out of Malacañang in a popular uprising last week.

Lawyer Eduardo Buenaflor, spokesperson for Fernandez, said Fernandez vowed to pursue his bid for the mayoralty of Quezon City.

"Nothing has changed in his plans. He will push through with his candidacy," Buenaflor said.

He said the veteran actor, a newcomer in politics, would file his candidacy before the Commission on Elections on Feb. 8 under the Lapian ng Masang Pilipino (Lamp), the party of the ousted President Estrada.

But city hall observers belittled Fernandez's candidacy, saying that with Estrada's downfall, his fellow actors would have a hard time entering politics.

"People now know better. Why vote for actors when there are more qualified people to vote for?" said one city hall official who asked not to be named.

Fernandez, a close ally of the ousted President, was one of the first few people who came to console the former first family when they left Malacañang for the last time on Saturday following the four-day revolt at the historic Edsa shrine.

In the May 2001 elections, Fernandez is expected to be pitted against formidable political figures like Quezon City Reps. Feliciano Belmonte and Dante Liban, Sen. Nikki Coseteng, Vice Mayor Connie Angeles and Ismael "Chuck" Mathay III, the son and namesake of incumbent Quezon City Mayor Mathay.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, January 23, 2000
3rd Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Heb 10:1-10
Gospel: Mk 3:31-35

Jesus mother and brothers came. As they stood outside, they sent someone to call him. The crowd sitting around Jesus told him, "Your mother and your brothers are outside asking for you." He replied, "Who are my mother and my brothers?"

And looking around at those who sat there he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. Whoever does the will of God is brother and sister and mother to me."

Commentary

"Blood is thicker than water." This maxim must have guided the family of Jesus to simply barge in and demand attention while Jesus was busy attending to other people. Would he prioritize "other people" to his family? This presumptuousness is promptly checked by Jesus in today's reading. "Water is thicker than blood." This was one bishop's charming interpretation of Jesus' response to his family. He was of course already alluding to the water of baptism which becomes the basis for the new relationship formed in people who have received the same spirit of adoption.

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Lovers found dead inside van

By Agnes E. Donato

TWO young lovers who had been reported missing a day after Christmas were discovered by Mandaluyong City police naked and lifeless inside a parked car on Sunday afternoon.

Case officer PO3 Nolasco Rivera identified the two victims as 22-year-old Mark Anthony Macaraig, an electronics communication engineering graduate, of No. 7 Bologna St., San Francisco Village, Taytay; and 24-year-old Mehia Illustrisimo, of No. 3 Dollar St., Meralco Village, Taytay, Rizal.

Police discovered their bodies in their late stage of decomposition.

Macaraig was completely naked, while his girlfriend was still wearing a brassiere and a pair of jeans.

Both were seated at the front seats of a green Tamaraw FX (UNZ-490) when discovered .

"We are still awaiting for the medico legal report, but it appears that the cause of death was monoxide suffocation. Their car was in an enclosed garage. It is possible that they were drunk and slept inside the car with the air condition unit open. But because there was poor ventilation, the air emitted from the muffler circulated back to their aircon unit," Rivera said.

In 1998, the male relatives of Carol Banawa suffered the same fate, when they were trapped inside their car while parked at the SM Megamall parking lot also in Mandaluyong City.

They were positively identified by the Macaraig's mother, Victoria when she visited their unoccupied house for rent located at 150 Fabella St., Barangay Addition Hills, Mandaluyong City on Jan. 21.

Police said there were no signs of forcible entry inside the garage and the bodies bore no stab our gunshot wounds. However, Rivera added, they have not completely ruled out the possibility of a foul play and would hire a mechanic to check if the car engine was burned.

The victim's mother Victoria Macaraig said her son and Illustrisimo were in their FX Tamaraw which left their house on Dec. 26. She said they were on their way to the Antipolo Church. But when they failed to return home, she became worried and reported the matter to the Taytay police.

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

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4	DOLBY SURROUND	LITTLE NICKY
5	DOLBY DIGITAL	HIGHLANDER
6	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	REMEMBER THE TITANS
7	DOLBY SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS
8	DOLBY SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY
9	DOLBY SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
10	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	SUPER IDOL

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 9350749

1	DOLBY SURROUND	SUPER IDOL
2	DOLBY SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
3	DOLBY SURROUND	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
4	DOLBY DIGITAL	RED PLANET
5	DOLBY SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS
6	DOLBY SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
7	DOLBY DIGITAL	LITTLE NICKY
8	DOLBY SURROUND	HIGHLANDER
9	DOLBY SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY
10	DOLBY SURROUND	LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE
11	DOLBY SURROUND	SPIRIT WARRIORS
12	DOLBY SURROUND	REMEMBER THE TITANS

SM CITY MANILA 5239240

1	DOLBY DIGITAL	RED PLANET
2	DOLBY DIGITAL	HIGHLANDER
3	DOLBY SURROUND	MIRACLE FIGHTER
4	DOLBY SURROUND	LITTLE NICKY
5	DOLBY DIGITAL	MEET THE PARENTS
6	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	THE 6TH DAY
7	DOLBY SURROUND	REMEMBER THE TITANS
8	DOLBY SURROUND	LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE
9	DOLBY SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
10	DOLBY SURROUND	SPIRIT WARRIORS
11	DOLBY SURROUND	SUPER IDOL
12	DOLBY SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN

GUADALUPE COMM'L CTR 8820950

1	ULTRA SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	HIGHLANDER
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	SUPER IDOL

SM MEGAMALL 6331901 • 6329401

1	DOLBY DIGITAL	PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
2	DOLBY SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS
3	DOLBY DIGITAL	LITTLE NICKY
4	DTS	HIGHLANDER
5	DOLBY SURROUND	REMEMBER THE TITANS
6	DOLBY SURROUND	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
7	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
8	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	SUPER IDOL
9	DOLBY SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
10	DOLBY SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY
12	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE

SM CITY NORTH EDSA 9295452

1	DOLBY SURROUND	SUPER IDOL
2	DOLBY SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	KANGKONG
4	DOLBY SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
5	DOLBY SURROUND	REMEMBER THE TITANS
6	DOLBY SURROUND	LITTLE NICKY
7	DTS	THE RED PLANET
8	DOLBY DIGITAL	HIGHLANDER
9	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE
10	DOLBY SURROUND	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS
12	DOLBY SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY

SM SOUTHMALL 8060888 • 8066762

1	ULTRA SURROUND	REMEMBER THE TITANS
2	ULTRA SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
3	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	THE RED PLANET
4	ULTRA SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
5	ULTRA SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS
6	ULTRA SURROUND	LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE
7	ULTRA SURROUND	LITTLE NICKY
8	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	HIGHLANDER
9	ULTRA SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY
10	ULTRA SURROUND	SUPER IDOL

TUTUBAN CENTER 2514302

1	ULTRA SURROUND	THE RED PLANET
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	LITTLE NICKY
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	HIGHLANDER
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA

SM CEBU 2313876

1	DOLBY SURROUND	MARKOVA
2	ULTRA SURROUND	HIGHLANDER
3	ULTRA SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS
4	ULTRA SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
5	ULTRA SURROUND	CROCODILE
6	ULTRA SURROUND	EMPERORS NEW GROOVE
7	DOLBY SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN

SM ILOILO 3209422

1	ULTRA SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY
2	ULTRA SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS
3	ULTRA SURROUND	DEATH ROW
4	ULTRA SURROUND	CRACKER JACK
5	ULTRA SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
6	ULTRA SURROUND	EMPERORS NEW GROOVE
7	ULTRA SURROUND	HIGHLANDER
8	ULTRA SURROUND	LOST SOULS

SM PAMPANGA 7128015

1	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	THE RED PLANET
2	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	HIGHLANDER
3	DOLBY SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS
5	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY
6	DOLBY SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA

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3 BALAHIBONG PUSA
4 THE 6TH DAY

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2 REMEMBER THE TITANS in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 THE RED PLANET THX in DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA (Phil. Premiere) in DTS DIGITAL SOUND Art Film
5 EMPERORS NEW GROOVE in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
6 LITTLE NICKY in DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
7 MEET THE PARENTS in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

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1 LITTLE NICKY in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
2 THE RED PLANET in SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND
3 MEET THE PARENTS in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
4 SOON TO OPEN Onstage

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1 THE RED PLANET THX in DSD/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
2 LITTLE NICKY in DSD DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 REMEMBER THE TITANS in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 HIGHLANDER in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5 BALAHIBONG PUSA in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

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MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 (DDS) RED PLANET
2 (SDDS) LITTLE NICKY
3 (DTS) MEET THE PARENTS
4 GOLD (DTS) RED PLANET
5 GOLD (DOLBY) HIGHLANDER
6 GOLD (SDDS) TANGING YAMAN
7 GOLD (DOLBY) REMEMBER THE TITANS
8 [illegible] THE 6TH DAY
9 [illegible] LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE
10 [illegible] BALAHIBONG PUSA

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
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1 SUPER IDOL
2 BALAHIBONG PUSA
3 (DTS) KANGKONG
4 RESERVE
5
6 (DTS)
Golden Pearl THX

Masagana CINEMAX 1-2 & 3
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1 (DOLBY) RED PLANET
2 (DTS) SUPER IDOL
3 LITTLE NICKY

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 831.6603
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 SUPER IDOL
3 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO

starmall Movies
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1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
3 KANGKONG
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) RED PLANET
5 PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP

Metropolis
(Alabang) tel 543.4001
1 SUPER IDOL
2 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
3 BALAHIBONG PUSA
4 HIGHLANDER
5 LITTLE NICKY
6 RED PLANET
7 KANGKONG
8 THE 6TH DAY

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4 ARMOUR OF GOD
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2 HOT SPOT
3 LABAN KUNG LABAN
4 CRIME STOPPER

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1 THE 6TH DAY
2 DEATH ROW

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC.
tel 930.9515
1 KANGKONG
2 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
3 SUPER IDOL

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
A SUPER IDOL

JC Cinema
(Parañaque) tel 825.8626
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
3 SUPER IDOL

GOTESCO CINEMAS

City
(Manila) tel 734.8564
1 (DOLBY) BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 KANGKONG
3 TANGING YAMAN
4 HIGHLANDER
5 MEET THE PARENTS
6 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
7 (DTS) RED PLANET
8 (SDDS) REMEMBER THE TITANS
9 (DOLBY) LITTLE NICKY

Caloocan
tel 362.3508
2 BALAHIBONG PUSA
3 KANGKONG
[illegible] DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
5
6

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 BALAHIBONG PUSA
3 SUPER IDOL
4 (SDDS) DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
5 LITTLE NICKY
6 (DOLBY) HIGHLANDER
7 (DTS) RED PLANET
8 KANGKONG
9 REMEMBER THE TITANS

Commonwealth
tel 951.0083
1 (DTS) RED PLANET
2 BALAHIBONG PUSA
3 TANGING YAMAN
4 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
5 (SDDS) REMEMBER THE TITANS
6 SUPERIDOL
7 (DOLBY) HIGHLANDER
8 KANGKONG

Ortigas
tel 656.6795
1 KANGKONG
2 THE 6TH DAY
3 (DTS) RED PLANET
4 BALAHIBONG PUSA
5 (SDDS) REMEMBER THE TITANS
6 (DOLBY) DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
7 (DOLBY) HIGHLANDER

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724
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Lords SUPER IDOL
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MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 RED PLANET
2 SUPER IDOL
3 BALAHIBONG PUSA
4 LITTLE NICKY

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215
1
3 SUPER IDOL

Super Cinerama
(Manila) tel 733.4226 or 733.4238
1 RED PLANET
2 BALAHIBONG PUSA
3 LITTLE NICKY
4 HIGHLANDER
5 KANGKONG

Divisoria Mall
(Manila) tel 244.4560 or 244.4619
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 KANGKONG
3 SUPER IDOL
4 RED PLANET
5 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
6 HIGHLANDER

Baclaran LRT Cinema
tel 512.0115 or 512.0116
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
3 SUPER IDOL

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 KANGKONG
3 (DTS) RED PLANET

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 (DTS) THE 6TH DAY
3 (DOLBY) RED PLANET
4 PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) RED PLANET
2 SUPER IDOL
3 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
4 (DTS) BALAHIBONG PUSA

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
2 BALAHIBONG PUSA
3 (DTS) RED PLANET
4 LOST SOULS
5 KANGKONG

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 RED PLANET
3 PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP

Olivarez Los Baños
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1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 RED PLANET
3 ROAD TRIP

Olivarez Tagaytay
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1 SUGO NG TONDO
2 THE 6TH DAY
3 KANGKONG

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736
1 PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
2 RED PLANET
3 SUPER IDOL

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376
1 RED PLANET
2 BALAHIBONG PUSA
3 SUPER IDOL
4 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 243.2783
1 (DTS) BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 (DTS) SUPER IDOL

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657
1 SUPER IDOL
2 BALAHIBONG PUSA
3 KANGKONG

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 RED PLANET
2 SUGATANG PUSO
3 UNBREAKABLE
4 THE 6TH DAY

Berma
tel 879.2168
1 CLOSED
2 CLOSED

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269
1 SUPER IDOL
2 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
3 BALAHIBONG PUSA
4 RED PLANET

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) MEET THE PARENTS
2 TANGING YAMAN
3 BALAHIBONG PUSA
4 (DTS EX) PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP

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Readers react to '11 disciples,' 'balimbing' and the envelope

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4. REMEMBER THE TITANS
5. HIGHLANDER
6. LITTLE NICKY
7. MEET THE PARENTS

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4. LITTLE NICKY
5. HIGHLANDER
6. BALAHIBONG PUSA

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1. MEET THE PARENTS
2. TANGING YAMAN
3. EMPERORS NEW GROOVE
4. CROCODILES
5. GATAS
6. EX-CON

DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101

ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	TANGING YAMAN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	BALAHIBONG PUSA
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	HIGHLANDER
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	RED PLANET
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	THE 6TH DAY
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	LITTLE NICKY
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	RED PLANET
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	KANGKONG
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	BALAHIBONG PUSA
MIRAMAR	KATAYAN / BODY TO BODY
ODEON	BALAHIBONG PUSA
ODEON-2	RED PLANET
ROBEN	KANGKONG
TANDEM-1	SPIRIT WARRIORS
TANDEM-2	NAGHUHUMIYAW
TIMES	WHAT LIES BENEATH / ANACONDA 2000
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SA IYO ANG SARAP SA IYO ANG LIGAYA
ACT-2	ARAYY
ACT-3	HIRAM NA KATAWAN
ACT-4	BIRADOR
CORONET-2	DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
QUEZON-1	KANGKONG
REMAR	BALAHIBONG PUSA
REMAR-2	KANGKONG
CUBAO	
OCEAN SUPERAMA	MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY
OCEAN CINEMA-A	LARO SA BAGA
OCEAN CINEMA-B	GUEVARRA
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-61 TO 70
CINEMA-1	EMPERORS NEW GROOVE
CINEMA-2	THE 6TH DAY
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-54091 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	KANGKONG
CINEMA-2	EMPERORS NEW GROOVE
CINEMA-3	DEATH ROW
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	THE 6TH DAY
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	THE 6TH DAY
CINEMA-6	BALAHIBONG PUSA
CINEMA-7	SPIRIT WARRIORS
CINEMA-8	TANGING YAMAN
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	MEET THE PARENTS
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	THE 6TH DAY
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
CINEMA-12	BALAHIBONG PUSA
CINEMA-14	GATAS
CINEMA-15	TANGING YAMAN
LORES	
CINEMA-2	TANGING YAMAN
CINEMA-3	THE 6TH DAY
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	EMPERORS NEW GROOVE
CINEMA-2	RED PLANET
CINEMA-3	HIGHLANDER
CINEMA-4	LITTLE NICKY
CINEMA-5	MEET THE PARENTS
CINEMA-6	REMEMBER THE TITANS

DOLLYWOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

HOW could one possibly write a show biz column when all eyes were on Edsa, Ayala and Mendiola? Even the stars themselves shed off their glamorous images to join the people on the streets.

There's a thin line between politics and show biz. Perhaps because some celebrities mistake one for the other, they keep on "acting" even when they're in the political arena, while some politicians seem like they're vying for acting awards.

Please allow me to give way to various comments e-mailed to me by readers who manage to find humor amid the crisis. In times like these, we can lose our other senses but we should not lose our sense of humor.

Let's take a break from show biz intrigues for a while. Come to think of it, what could be more intriguing than that controversial envelope in the impeachment trial? As they say during awards nights, pass the envelope please.

"'Tanging Yaman' is such a hit. **Erap** should make a sequel and the movie should be called 'Nakaw na Yaman.'"

"Forgive and forget Erap? All he does is get and not give."

"God had 12 disciples and one of them was **Judas**. The 11 senators are definitely Erap's apostles and who else could Judas be? No wonder he's fond of the letter J."

"*Dapat ini-vite nila si* **Lolit Solis** *sa* Senate *para kung takot sila pabuksan 'yung* envelope, *mag* envelope switching *si* Lolit *para lusot sila*."

Beth Tamayo (via text): "For the first time in my life *na*-depress *ako* for our country. Had they opened that envelope, we would have known if it was relevant or not to the proceedings. 1 + 1 *lang naman 'yan e*."

"It's more than coincidence that Erap and *pera* have the same letters. He has to live up to his name."

"Stars like **Bong Revilla, Lani Mercado** and **Nora Aunor** who made *balimbing* are so disgusting. Obvious *naman* that they're politically motivated 'cause they're also running in the next elections. *Mas nakakabilib pa 'yung talagang* loyal *kay* Erap *kasi kahit*

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6:30 PM - Red Planet
8:50 PM - Red Planet
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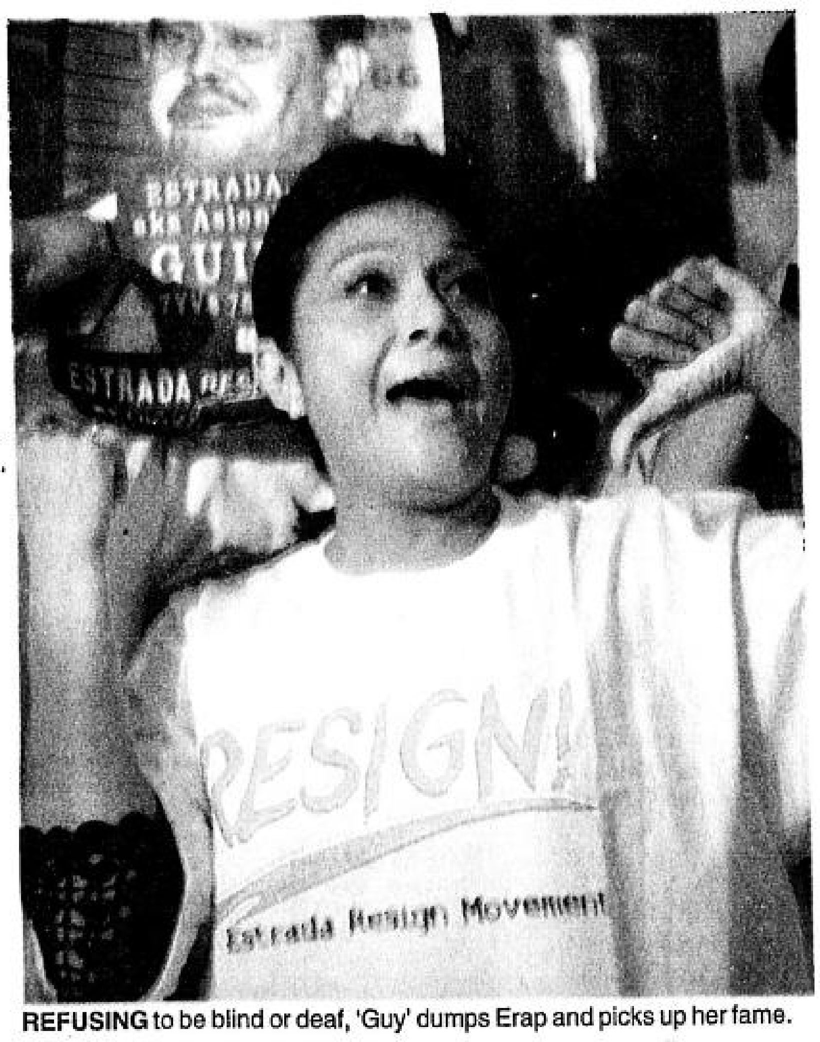
Pelikula is one of the beneficiary projects of the LRP Foundation published jointly with the U-P College of Mass Communication

Hear the Difference, Feel the Excitement

ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Nora Aunor, 'oragon'



REFUSING to be blind or deaf, 'Guy' dumps Erap and picks up her fame.

Fellow Bicolanos describe the superstar with a once vulgar term that now means brilliant, outstanding, brave.

BY REY NASOL AND ROLY EMBILE
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LEGAZPI CITY—Superstar Nora Aunor's turnaround on Thursday made Bicolanos proud while they felt shame for Senators Gregorio Honasan and Francisco Tatad who, by voting "no" to the opening of the "Jose Velarde" documents in the impeachment trial, triggered massive protests that ended in President Estrada stepping down.

Aunor, Honasan and Tatad are all from Bicol.

Although Bicolanos suspect Aunor's decision was politically motivated, they told the INQUIRER they were very happy that another woman proved that the people of Bicol are really "oragon."

Oragon, once considered a vulgar term unfit for public speaking, has come to mean brilliant, outstanding or brave.

The term has been widely used in local radio and TV shows lately after Jose Cardinal Sanchez, who was born in Pandan, Catanduanes, used the word because of its unique Bicol sound and meaning.

But Bicolanos have little regard for Tatad who, in 1998, belittled then presidential candidate Joseph Estrada for his "mental incapacity," and Honasan, the former coup leader who could not leave the shadow of Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile.

"That's the woman, oragon," Yolly Bercasio said in the Bicol dialect. "I did not expect she would be the one to show the orag of Bicolanos."

Bercasio, a vendor at the Daraga public market in Legazpi City, praised Aunor on Thursday when she learned that the actress had left Estrada.

Juliet Benitez, 35, a homemaker from Tabaco, Albay, said Aunor deserved to be called oragon and stand alongside Sen. Raul Roco and Rep. Joker Arroyo, Bicolanos both who were at the forefront of the movement to remove Estrada from office.

Benitez said Tatad and Honasan betrayed the oragon spirit of Bicolanos when they voted against the opening the envelope that contained documents on the Equitable-PCIBank bank account of "Jose Velarde."

Peling Nacion, a retail store owner in Legazpi City, said she never expected Aunor to turn her back on Estrada.

Text messages like "Nora in; Tatad, Honasan out," flew thick after Aunor's turnaround on Thursday.

Charito Moron, 65, another market vendor in Daraga town, said she was very proud of her idol.

"If I were a resident of Camarines Sur, I would certainly vote for her," she said.

In a radio interview aired here, Aunor said she helped Estrada campaign for the presidency because she hoped he would help the people, especially the poor.

"Let's not pretend to be blind," she said. "Let's not pretend to be deaf." She added that a lot of people would have been hurt had Estrada remained in office.

Aunor had a few critics, too.

"She could lose the May 14 election for turning her back (on) Erap," said an employee in the Albay capitol.

Aunor is the united opposition's choice for the gubernatorial seat of Camarines Sur, challenging the incumbent, Luis Villafuerte.

Aunor's Cinderella story started in Camarines Sur, where as a girl she sold water to train passengers passing through her hometown. From there, she was brought to Manila where she triumphed as a champion of a weekly amateur singing contest and made history as the biggest star of Philippine movies.

Beauty is not skin-deep for Chin-Chin

CHIN-CHIN Gutierrez, undeniably one of the most beautiful character actresses in Philippine cinema, is looking forward to new possibilities in the new year, with the help of a new management firm, Les Films Du Phoenix.

Chin-chin has portrayed sensitive and poignant characters like Maria Clara in "Noli Me Tangere," the telemovie that launched her to stardom.

On stage, her versatility won attention when she played the title role in Gilda Cordero-Fernando's "Luna: An Aswang Romance" and Inang Bayan in UP's "Price of Redemption."

On television, aside from her guest appearances in sitcoms and dramas, she hosts IBC 13's magazine show "Good Take" every Monday, 4 to 4:30 p.m.

She did a first when she danced on "Eezy Dancing Prime Time." And she sang a duet, "Best of Me," with Martin Nievera on his "Forever" album.

Her chameleon-like qualities are further displayed when she sings in Vietnamese, French, Mandarin and German. And, oh yes, this multi-faceted actress also paints, composes music and writes poetry.

As well, she's into scuba diving, nature trekking, wall climbing, etc., and is a vegetarian.

As an earth advocate, she works with NGOs like the Mother Earth Foundation, Saniblakas para sa Inang Kalikasan (Salika) and other volunteer groups.

"It's cleanup time," she says. "To solve our garbage problem we must rid ourselves of our inner garbage. Mother Earth's acronym is ME. If you hurt Mother Earth you hurt ME. If you heal Mother Earth, you heal ME."

WHAT can't this very lovely face not do?

Tom Hanks hits the bullseye anew

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

YOU'VE got to hand it to **Tom Hanks:** he knows how to pick his movie projects. He just doesn't choose to act in sure-fire formula movies because he realizes that, after a few of those, viewers get sated and stellar careers start to decline. The likes of **Sylvester Stallone** and **Demi Moore** can attest to that.

No, Hanks' way is to intersperse his commercial formats with projects that are so daring that only superstars with his track record of hits could convince producers to bankroll them. Going out on a cinematic limb isn't really "experimental," it's essential to keeping a superstar's career flying high.

Of course, there are terrible risks involved, and the superstar's career is always on the line. If the film flops, people will dismiss the star as a bad bet—and bettor.

But, if it goes against people's dire predictions and succeeds both critically and commercially, the daring superstar is lionized and ensconced even higher on Hollywood's golden pedestal.

That, happily enough, is what's happened to Tom Hanks, thanks to the success that his latest starrer, "Cast Away," is enjoying all over the world. The project was deemed "dangerous" by veteran movie industry hands because its long middle part had only Hanks on screen for close to an hour.

You see, the movie casts Hanks as the lone survivor of a plane crash who spends four long years alone on an island before he's rescued.

Other survivor movies put in additional characters, complications, at least an animal or two for the survivor to interact with. But this movie chooses not to do all that and just concentrates on Hanks' lonely battle with the elements and his growing sense of despair.

Of course, director **Robert Zemeckis** is on hand to keep things eventful despite the script's rigorously focused thrust, but nobody (not even Hanks or Zemeckis) was sure that it would all come together in the end.

The film's success is a tribute to Hanks' talent and appeal as a performer. To make things even more dodgy, it was decided to completely deglamorize his character, so that, at the end of his stay on the island, he looks terribly gaunt and his head and body hair has grown to seaweed length and disarray.

Only an actor as confident and adventurous as Hanks would have opted for such a potentially off-putting depiction.

To make the radical change in his character's appearance believable, he lost more than 50 pounds—the opposite, by the way of **Robert de Niro**'s feat for "Raging Bull," where he gained 50 pounds to play an aging champion boxer who'd gone to pot.

Hanks and De Niro—that's an interesting and even surprising juxtaposition. After all, De Niro is regarded as one of the most gifted dramatic actors in films, while Hanks started his acting career in lightweight romantic comedies.

To hear his name uttered in the same breath as De Niro's now is a tribute to the hard work Hanks has expended in transforming himself into a "serious" actor. No comedian in recent memory has been as successful in effecting that radical transformation.

But the shift hasn't been easy to effect. Hanks started the previous decade with two flops — "The Bonfire of the Vanities" and "Jose Versus the Volcano."

But he learned a lot from those failures, and by 1993, he hit his stride with "Sleepless in Seattle," which some film buffs regard as the best romantic comedy filmed in the '90s.

He hasn't stopped hitting the bullseye since.

TV treats

TODAY at 4 a.m., on Viva Cinema 23, the film on view is the sexy drama, "Kaagaw," starring **Rita Magdalena** and **Ynez Veneracion**. At 8 p.m., "I Love You Sabado" topbills **Janno Gibbs** and **Mikee Cojuangco**. At 2 a.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 24, "Alex San Diego, Wanted" stars **Rudy Fernandez** and **Isabel Rivas**.

On Star Movies on Thursday, Jan. 25 at 11 p.m., **Chuck Norris** headlines "President's Man." On the National Geographic Channel on Friday, Jan. 26 at 9 p.m., **Alan Alda** interviews space scientists about the possibility of a manned "Journey to Mars."

Readers react . . .

(From page A17)

palubog na ang barko niya, di sila bumibitiw."

"*Nakakatawa naman 'yung ibang artista lalo na 'yung mga laos na. Nakiki*-ride on *sa* issue *para mapag-usapan lang sila. Ang* fake!"

"*Mabuti na ring na*-obvious *'yung* 11 senators *na 'di* fair *ngayon pa lang para nalaman natin kung sinong tutoo sa kanila kesa naman umabot tayo sa dulo ng* trial."

"Erap Resign? Resign the Jose Velarde check? Erap Remain? Where will we put his remains?"

"*May bagong* funds of Erap aside from developmental. *May* envelopmental *na rin.*"

"*Buti pa ang* Rosalinda *noon* suspense ang ending! *E 'yung* trial *na mala*-telenovela *na* 'cause everyone is watching it *alam mo na ang* ending *agad.*"

"*Bakit tayo magpapa-onse sa* 11 *na* senators *na 'yon?*"

"*Dapat magtayo ng* convenience store *'yung* 11 senators and they'll call it Amen-11."

"*Ayaw nila pabuksan 'yung* envelope. *Utak nga nila di nila mabuksan e.*"

"*May* e-mail *at* snail mail *pero wala nang tatalo sa kabagalan ng pagbukas ng* 2nd envelope. *Baka hinahanap pa ng* 11 senators *ang* stamp. Stamp of approval *ni* Erap?"

For feedback, e-mail wateringhole2000@yahoo.com

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AMERICAN PSYCHO

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AMERICAN PSYCHO
Based on the the most controversial and hotly-debated novel of the last decade

Based on the popular novel by Bret Easton Ellis, Mary Harron's cinematic adaptation retains the over-the-top humor that made Ellis' book such a cult favorite.

Christian Bale is hysterical as Patrick Bateman, the successful commodities broker whose disgust for everyone he encounters leads him to committing heinous murders.

This film, w/c would be shown only at ARTFILM of Glorietta 4 cinemas, tackles all things 80s, including pop music, fashion, and the world of big business, all to hilarious effect. Graphic and brutal, AMERICAN PSYCHO is an unflinching satire, but one that should keep enlightened audiences laughing throughout.

SKYJEMAH International

WARNING: Public is cautioned in viewing this controversial film for its strong violence, sexuality, drug use and language.

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4 LITTLE NICKY 1:40, 3:45, 5:50, 7:55, 10:00	5 MEET THE PARENTS 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00	6 HIGHLANDER 12:00, 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 8:00, 10:00

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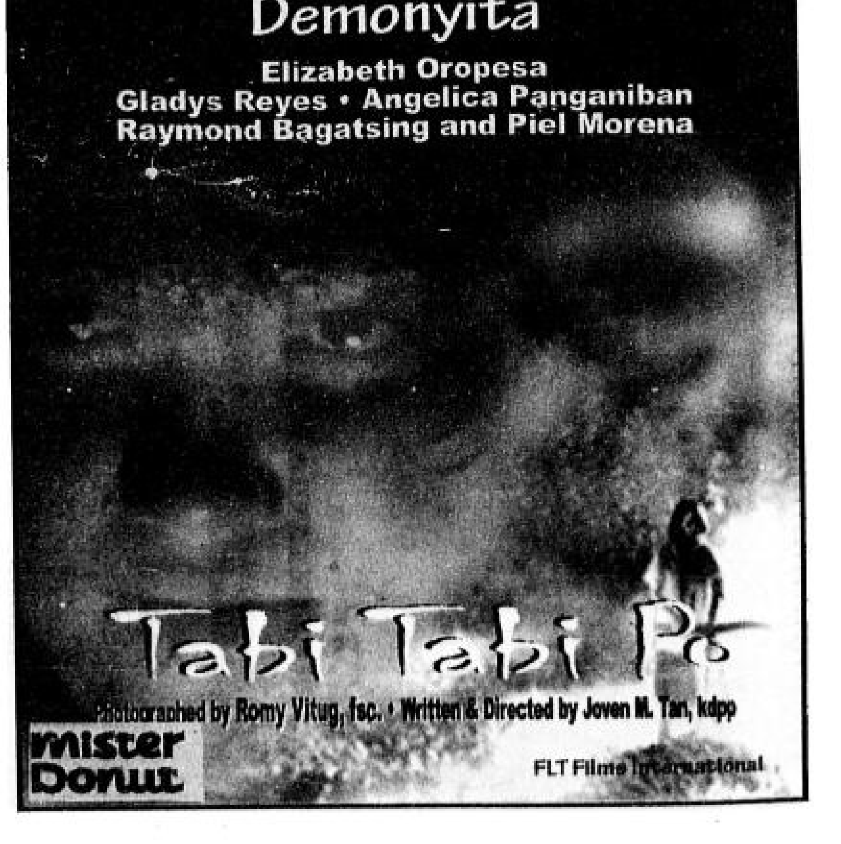

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T-bill yields fall; BSP to cut rates

By CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday said the continued recovery of the peso would allow monetary authorities to cut overnight interest rates by another half-percentage point on Thursday.

This led the benchmark treasury bill yield dropping for a 10th week on hopes the central bank will cut interest rates further after the peso rallied and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's assumption of the presidency boosted investor confidence.

"It is possible to lower overnight rates by another 50 basis points on Thursday depending on the stability of the peso and also on how the Fed (US Federal Reserve) moves," BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said yesterday.

The peso's strong rebound last Friday by P7.125 from the previous day was sustained yesterday. Buenaventura explained that with the political risk premium gone, the peso could now trade within its normal spread of P3 to P4 over the Thai baht.

He said the significant decline across-the-board in the treasury bill rates yesterday should further boost the resolve of the policy-making Monetary Board to bring down BSP's key policy rates.

A 50-basis point cut in BSP's rates Thursday to take effect on Monday would bring down the overnight borrowing rate to 12 percent and overnight lending to 14.25 percent.

The BSP uses overnight rates as a tool to maintain price stability and to help ward off volatility in the peso. The BSP had increased overnight rates by four percentage points last October to help defend the currency from the aftermath of the "Juetengate" scandal.

Last Friday, the peso dramatically bounced back to its pre-"Juetengate" level of 47.50 to $1 from a historic low of 54.79:$1 last Thursday, two days after the Senate decided not to allow the opening of the second envelope that was believed to contain key evidence in the impeachment trial against Mr. Estrada.

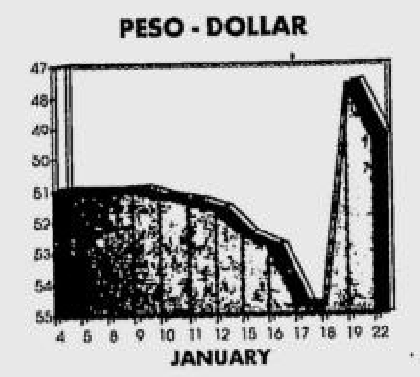
At yesterday's Bureau of Treasury auction, the average yield on the 91-day bill, which banks use to set lending rates, fell to 11.760 percent from 12.365 percent last week. The yield is at its lowest level since October.

A stronger peso could compel the central bank to further cut its key interest rates. The peso rallied as much as 3.3 percent to 46 per US dollar in local interbank trading, after gaining 15 percent Friday.

In other government securities, the 182-day bill yield fell to 12.556 percent from 13.657 percent, and the 364-day bill yield fell to 13.136 percent from 14.237 percent. *With a report from Bloomberg*

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



GRAPHS BY ROBERT B. ANDRES

Peso-Dollar Rate

P49.30 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Jan. 22, 2001

¥116.85 = $1
The US dollar was trading at 116.85 as of 5 p.m., Jan. 22, 2001

GOLD:$266.30/266.90
per ounce Hong Kong, Jan. 22, 2001

Jan. 22, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.070549	1.000000	53.3570
Japan	Yen	0.009140	0.008538	0.4556
United Kingdom	Pound	1.567070	1.463800	78.1040
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.137264	0.128218	6.8413
Switzerland	Franc	0.653571	0.610501	32.5745
Canada	Dollar	0.708598	0.661901	35.3171
Singapore	Dollar	0.616854	0.576203	30.7445
Australia	Dollar	0.596074	0.556793	29.7088
Bahrain	Dinar	2.839804	2.652661	141.5380
Kuwait	Dinar	N/A	N/A	N/A
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.285442	0.266631	14.2266
Brunei	Dollar	0.614375	0.573888	30.6209
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000113	0.000106	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.024908	0.023267	1.2415
UAE	Dirham	0.291488	0.272279	14.5280
Korea	Won	0.000839	0.000784	0.0418
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.934100	49.8408
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.477598	25.4832
France	Franc	0.152450	0.142403	7.5982
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.423876	22.6168
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.067884	3.6221
Belgium	Franc	0.024790	0.023156	1.2355
Italy	Lire	0.000516	0.000482	0.0257
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.157104	8.3826
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004659	0.2486
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005614	0.2995
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024790	0.023156	1.2355
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.186062	63.2847

Power sector restructuring pushed

OUTGOING National Power Corp. president Federico E. Puno has urged his replacement not to bow to various pressure groups specially in pursuing the passage of the power restructuring bill and the power rate adjustments needed to prop up the finances of the state-run power firm.

Puno, an appointee of ousted President Estrada, formally filed his courtesy resignation to the office of newly installed President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo last Saturday, but personally addressed Napocor employees yesterday.

"The incoming Napocor president should not bow down to pressures because there will be many pressures for him to make certain decisions to favor some people," Puno said in an interview yesterday.

He said that this would be crucial to the privatization of the government-run power firm, which currently has a monopoly over the generation and transmission of electricity in the country.

Napocor sources said the new administration was considering Rep. Marcial Punzalan as Napocor president and Antonio V. Del Rosario as energy secretary. Del Rosario is currently president and CEO of Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Development Corp.

Business groups welcome Arroyo appoinment

LOCAL business groups welcomed President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's appointment of former Sen. Alberto Romulo as finance secretary as a sign she has the right policies to revive one of Asia's weakest economies.

Ms Macapagal and Romulo must tackle slumping government revenues, rising unemployment and weak consumer demand by convincing companies to resume investments they froze during a six-month fraud probe into the government of Joseph Estrada. While Estrada was toppled this weekend, Ms Macapagal still needs to win the backing of the poor by turning around the economy.

"We're happy with the choice of Romulo as finance secretary—he's an honest man and a simple guy with the requisite background and qualifications," said Bill Luz, executive director of the Makati Business Club, considered the voice of big business in the Philippines.

Luz said the business community expects Romulo to give priority to raising government revenue by improving tax collection and curbing smuggling. "The first thing he must focus on is revenue generation. The government can't continue to cut spending," to control the deficit, said Luz.

Romulo, a lawyer, has the necessary experience. He served as budget secretary under former President Aquino when she replaced dictator Ferdinand Marcos after the 1986 "people power" uprising. He ran for the Senate in 1987 and served there until 1998. He was one of the authors of a law that reorganized the central bank in 1993. *Bloomberg*

BSP head, Romulo see rosier outlook

THE QUICK resolution of the political crisis prompted the euphoric new administration to forecast rosier economic prospects this year alongside lower interest rates and even a lower budget deficit.

"We are already reviewing the growth targets as well as the deficit numbers," said incoming Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo, the first to be appointed by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

He would replace Estrada's finance chief Jose T. Pardo in a formal turnover tentatively set on Wednesday.

Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura said he expected a half- to one-percentage point improvement in growth rates from the range that was earlier set by Estrada's economic team.

The previous administration had projected a 3- to 3.5-percent growth in gross domestic product, 3.2- to 3.7-percent growth in gross national product, an inflation average of 6 to 7 percent, government borrowing rate of 11 to 12 percent, peso average rate of 47-49 to $1, and a budget deficit of P121 billion to P130 billion.

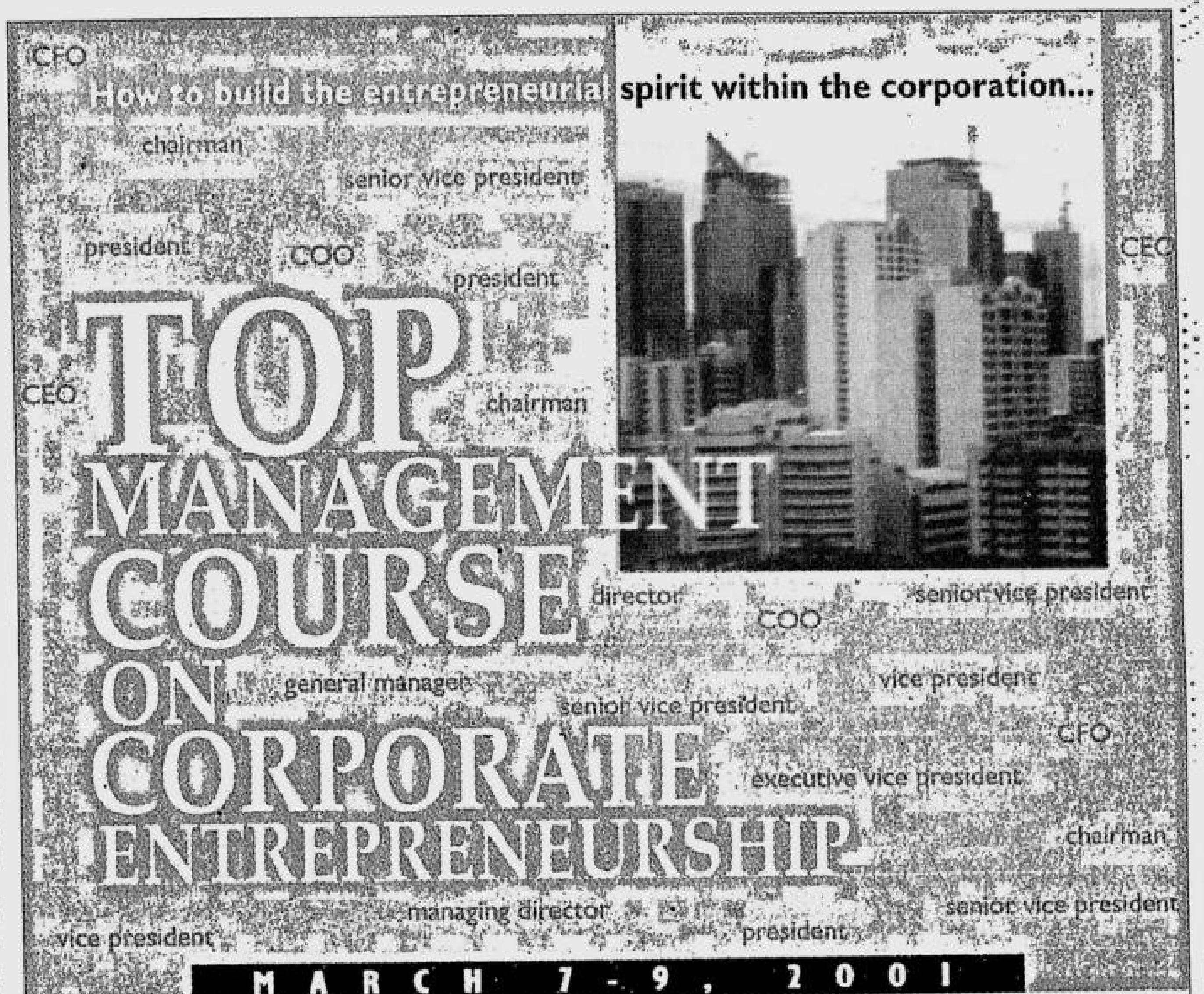
Romulo said these numbers would be revised by the National Economic and Development Authority under its new head, Dante Canlas.

Buenaventura, who is protected by a six-year term to July 2005, said he would not resign even out of courtesy since it would only send a wrong signal to the foreign markets.

"If I resign it would only send a wrong signal to the international community because the BSP is supposed to be independent and apolitical. It is not a question of willingness to stay on because I have to stay on," said the former classmate of ousted President Estrada.

Romulo agreed that Buenaventura's tenure should be respected by the new government.

The BSP chief also said if the new fiscal managers could bring down interest rates and the budget gap, then the central bank could also afford to bring down its key policy rates to 9.5 to 10.5 percent from its earlier target of 11 to 12 percent within the year.



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Gloria in exorcist

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

TIME now to look into this new element in the financial markets. Of course it's this thing called "euphoria." Stocks. Forex. Bonds. Name the market, and it's most likely turning upbeat by the hour. So how must you handle this "euphoria" thing?

First of all, bear in mind that "euphoria" has nothing to do with that high-class disco at Intercon hotel in Makati, which was a hit before your mother was born. Last of all, your mother would rather not give away her age by saying she saw the era of disco.

That's not the point, however. The point is, in the financial markets, "euphoria" relies on the present—the here and now. It is shortsighted. It doesn't give a damn about the past or the future. It also can't stand boring, mechanical disco music.

Without question, therefore, you can say there's "euphoria" in the financial markets today, no matter how temporary it may be. To know it, you don't even need an en banc resolution by the one and only head of the Supreme Court.

***

IN the stock market, for instance, you just know there's "euphoria" when the main index jumps by more than 400 points, as it did yesterday. And that was even before trading could start! This is not good. As a matter of fact, that is bad.

For opposite of "euphoria," right there on its flip side, is none other than "panic." Both are extremes. In the past couple of months, as you know, financial markets were treated to bouts of "panic." Everybody feared civil strife.

And now, finally, the story can be told. My info from high offices indicated that, by December last year, or after only a couple of months of trouble in the streets, the Philippine government was already shut off from any form of credit from abroad.

In other words, with foreign credit windows closed, the administration of former President Joseph Ejercito Estrada—aka the man named Band . . . Wrist Band—was already doomed. The plan to get rid of him already succeeded last month.

***

FOUR months ago, it was proclaimed that our economy already collapsed and that we all just died. That was when, because of fear of civil strife, the peso took a severe beating from speculation. Thus there sprang up a simple proposal.

It was said that the only way for us to rebuild the economy, which already collapsed, and this was obvious because the economy was still growing, was to boot out the leader. Why couldn't we just take power from him without further ado, anyway?

The proposal, as you know, was accomplished recently. It doesn't take the back-up of the military top brass to realize that, as a result, there's "euphoria" in the financial markets. Well, a new leader was installed into power without much ado.

Not even a single campaign poster or platform of government was put up by acting President Gloria Macapagal "hyphen" Arroyo. I'm beginning to like our political process. Already, rumors are going around about a plot to oust her. *Ano ba yan?*

***

ANYWAY, even with such rumors in circulation via text messages, the markets are swinging from one extreme to the other. The new administration seems to be exorcising the evil out of the markets. So what is that—Gloria in exorcist?

Either way, however, whether it's "euphoria" or it's "panic," the markets are distorted. This means the opposite of "good." (For the sake of Sen. Ramon Revilla and his son-in-law, Sen. Robert Jaworski, it really just means it's bad.)

Thus, the very first appointment announced by Macapagal "hyphen" Arroyo was the Secretary of Finance, former Sen. Alberto Romulo. It doesn't take a genius to notice that, as finance secretary, Romulo heads the finance department, which takes care of an important part of economic management, and that is "finance."

Moreover, it doesn't take the backing of the entire business community for us to realize that the terms "finance department" and "financial markets" actually share a common root word, which is "finan."

***

STILL, it's not true that Romulo was appointed finance secretary because he has something to do with Metrobank. Well, the good secretary was once connected with the country's largest bank. And so were the two other finance secretaries before him.

What is in Metrobank, anyway? Former Finance Secretary Jose Pardo sat in its board. Former Finance Secretary Edgardo Espiritu was its longtime executive. And now there's Romulo, who is a top consultant to the Metrobank board.

Part of the euphoria in the financial markets must have something to do with Romulo's appointment. The man has a reputation for integrity. These days, integrity seems to be the key word to the influential segments of the public.

For like in the past, this euphoria comes from a big political change. Only a couple of months ago, we picked up nothing but bad signals about the economy. Overnight, the same scaremongers see nothing but the opposite. Ah, politics!

***

ALRIGHT, how the newly installed administration of Macapagal "hyphen" Arroyo manages its finances is important to the financial markets. It was wise for the new administration to have named a finance secretary right away.

But what seemed also to concern the new administration a great deal is . . . well, gambling. Even before a Cabinet was formed, Renato Valencia, the former head of SSS under Kuya Eddie, was named the new chair of Pagcor.

And why is that? Ranked according to importance of public service, state-owned casinos and such hardly beats the garbage problem. Yet the Pagcor position seemed to take top priority in the new administration.

I wonder if Valencia's mission concerns some important documents in Pagcor. You know, like, they should not just disappear? They may help the new administration in running after some crooks.

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CAPITOL HILLS	100,000	125,000
CELEBRITY SPORTS	200,000	215,000
EAGLE RIDGE A/B*/C**	380,000	400,000/500,000*/700,000**
EVERCREST	-	150,000
FONTANA D/C*/B**	90,000/120,000*	92,500/150,000/*280,000**
FOREST HILLS A/B*/C**	-	290,000/420,000*/450,000**
MAKATI SPORTS A/B*	400,000	415,000/625,000*
MT. MALARAYAT A/C (with lot)*	400,000	425,000/2.6 M*
MANILA GOLF	13 M	15,250,000
MANILA POLO CLUB	2,550,000	2,600,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS A/B*	800,000/850,000*	850,000
METROPOLITAN A/B*	160,000/160,000*	165,000
MIMOSA IND./CORP.*	200,000/350,000*	240,000/550,000*
ORCHARD A/B*/C**	300,000/600,000**	330,000/425,000*
PHILIPPINE COLUMBIAN	80,000	85,000
PUERTO AZUL A/B*	-	130,000/Pls. call*
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ROYALE TAGAYTAY A/B*	120,000	130,000/150,000*
SHERWOOD HILLS A/B*C**	-	275,000/350,000*/450,000**
STA. ELENA A/B*	-	2,000,000/2.2 M*
TAT FILIPINAS GOLF A/B*	300,000	350,000/550,000*
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WACK WACK	7.5M all in	-

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Equitable shareholders rethink plan to sell out

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE MAJOR shareholders of Equitable PCI Bank may opt to stick it out with their holdings in the country's third largest bank if it starts getting back the deposits that were withdrawn at the height of the impeachment trial of former President Estrada.

Equitable PCI chair Ricardo Romulo said the majority shareholders—the Go family, the Government Service Insurance System and the Social Security System—were expecting the bank to stabilize within the week with more deposit inflows.

Go stressed that the bank has not made any formal negotiations with investor groups that have been rumored to be eyeing to take over the bank—Bank of the Philippine Islands, Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. and Banco Santander.

Romulo said the bank's majority shareholders were still exploring all options available, including the sale to a strategic partner.

A majority block of Equitable PCI shares have been reportedly offered for sale following the massive withdrawals from the bank over the last two months because it was used by former President Joseph Estrada as a conduit bank for "jueteng" collections and transfer of money.

Romulo admitted that the bank had experienced heavy withdrawals because depositors were spooked by the bank's complicity in President Estrada's corruption scandal. He stressed, though, that the bank has not sought emergency assistance from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas but he declined to say how much funds were pulled out by depositors.

The Go family and its government financial institution (GFI) partners have been reported to be reviewing several offers from local and foreign groups for a buy-out deal involving cash and stock swaps last week.

A top investment banker said the Go family was demanding a cash sale for its 30-percent share in Equitable PCI Bank while the Social Security System and the Government Service Insurance System were amenable to a shares swap with a potential white knight.

The source said the Gos wanted cash which they could use to cover for other loans guaranteed by former Equitable PCI chair George Go. The banker said the family was reluctant to let go of what it considers as the family heirloom but the massive withdrawals in the bank and the absence of inflows to replace the lost accounts left them with no options to save the bank.

The source said GSIS and SSS were amenable to a stock-swap deal in order to attract interest for its shares. The source said that GSIS and SSS reckoned that they would be better off holding stocks of a blue chip foreign or local investor group than holding on to its Equitable PCI shares.

This is why some of the potential big-name buyers have been looking for cash-rich partners to provide the cash to bankroll their buy-out move.

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SEC asked to stop NSC owners' takeover plan

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE CREDITOR banks of National Steel Corp. have asked the Securities and Exchange Commission to prevent stockholders of the ailing steel company from regaining control of the company which is now under liquidation.

In a letter to SEC Chair Lilia Bautista, members of the steering committee for mortgage trust indenture creditors of NSC claimed they had received reports that NSC stockholders recently held a board meeting where they appointed their board members and officers.

NSC, which is 80-percent owned by Hottick Investments Inc. of Malaysia, was placed under liquidation by the SEC in early October.

Members of the steering committee noted that the new board and officers were planning to take over the operations of the company and lease out NSC's steel mill in Iligan to Allengoal Steel Trading and Fabrication Co.

"The creditors of NSC would like to put on record that NSC is under liquidation and thus, it is under the direct control and supervision of the SEC through the liquidator. There could not be any controlling body other than the SEC through the appointed liquidator while the liquidation is underway," the creditors said.

"We, therefore, urge the SEC to take steps to protect the interest of the NSC creditors in the light of the recent actions of the NSC stockholders. In particular, the SEC should ensure that no unauthorized parties be granted access to any NSC property to the detriment of the NSC creditors," the creditors said.

DISCLOSURES

PURSUANT to the agreement between **Alsons Cement Corp.** and **Blue Circle Philippines Inc.**, **Republic Cement Corp.** has issued a notice that it would exercise its option to purchase the remaining 63,801,497 class A common shares and 15,000,000 class B common shares of **Iligan Cement Corp.** These shares represent 97 percent of the option shares.

* * *

UNION Cement Corp. furnished the Philippine Stock Exchange a copy of the plan and articles of its merger with **Atlas Cement Marketing Corp.**, **Davao Union Marketing Corp.**, and **Bacnotan Marketing Corp.**, approved by the Securities and Exchange Commission on Jan. 11, 2001.

* * *

SELECTA Dairy Products Inc. informed the PSE that the Securities and Exchange Commission approved on Jan. 16 its amended articles of incorporation reflecting, among others, the change in its corporate name to **Philstar.com Inc.** However, this change will not yet be reflected in the Exchange's computer system until the procedures and guidelines for conversion of the old stock certificates to new ones are made available.

* * *

GERONIMO Velasco Jr. has resigned as president of **Republic-Asahi Glass Corp.**, a subsidiary of **Republic Glass Holdings Corp.** Renato Ermita was elected to succeed him. Velasco continues to be the president of RGHC.

Compiled by Armin P. Adina, PDI Research

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Monday, January 22, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	8	8	7.8	7.8	165,000
Banco Filipino Sav & Mort	120	120	120	120	500
Bank of the Phil. Islands	69	69	67.5	69.5	2,765,600
Chinatrust Comm. Bank	19	19	19	19	4,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	79	79	59	59.5	1,675,000
First E-Bank Corp.	2	2.36	2	2.36	25,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	260	260	220	241	1,049,410
Phil. Bank of Comm.	150	150	150	150	1,000
Philippine National Bank	42	46	36	36.5	4,560,200
Phil. Savings Bank	30	30	30	30	9,000
Rizal Comm'l Bkg Corp. A	29	29	29	29	3,500
Security Bank Corp.	29	31	29	31	110,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	36	39	36	36	6,400
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	2	2	1.6	1.7	1,620,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.38	0.4	0.38	0.38	450,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1100	1100	1100	1100	2,960
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.3	1.34	1.3	1.3	1,547,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1050	1050	960	1020	23,140
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	60	62	60	61	521,300
Diversified Fin. Network	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	2,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	0.7	0.7	0.57	0.6	15,620,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	860	860	750	780	25,490
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.0625	0.0625	0.0625	0.0675	29,800,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	60,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp	4.1	4.3	4.1	4.3	61,000
Piltel	0.75	0.8	0.65	0.65	3,000,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co	0.49	0.52	0.49	0.49	470,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1050	1060	950	950	1,062,560
Ivantage Corporation	1.02	1.1	0.92	0.98	4,960,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.049	0.049	0.042	0.049	595,200,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	67.5	67.5	55	59	99,100
Manila Electric Co. B	72	72	56	60.5	19,653,000
Petron Corp.	1.92	1.92	1.54	1.54	39,174,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.99	0.99	0.89	0.89	160,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.12	1.14	1.08	1.12	3,009,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	1	1.04	0.88	0.89	6,240,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.56	0.56	150,000
Negros Navigation Co.Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	20,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.41	0.42	4,200,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	10,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	130,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.65	0.71	0.65	0.7	1,400,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.46	2.5	2,533,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	14.5	14.5	11.75	11.75	6,280,000
La Tondena Distillers Inc.	40	46	35.5	37	2,481,300
Pancake House, Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.58	1.6	166,000
Rfm Corp.	1.08	1.14	1	1	2,380,000
San Miguel Corp. A	51.5	56	50.5	50.5	655,000
San Miguel Corp. B	70	73	57.5	58.5	2,261,000
Universal Robina Corp.	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	10,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.45	0.48	0.41	0.41	1,200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.55	0.58	0.47	0.53	520,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	10,000
Ayala Corp.	10	10	8.2	8.8	47,624,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	20,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.48	1.7	1.48	1.6	3,143,000
Alliance Global Group Inc	12	13	12	13	1,600
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.86	1	0.86	0.94	340,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.28	0.34	0.28	0.34	1,030,000
APC Group Inc.	0.11	0.18	0.11	0.18	400,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	20,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	210,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.3	2.6	2.3	2.6	74,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	100,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	11.5	12	11.5	12	4,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	4.05	4.05	2.95	3.1	90,804,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	1,410,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.28	0.3	2,690,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.22	0.26	0.22	0.24	380,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.41	0.42	0.37	0.39	11,280,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.11	0.12	5,900,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.044	0.045	0.044	0.045	600,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.04	1.04	0.82	0.94	12,870,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	2.65	2.65	2.65	2.65	5,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	29	29	22.75	22.75	1,268,400
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	200,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.46	0.46	0.36	0.37	6,900,000
Guoco Holdings (Phils.)	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	940,000
House of Investments Inc.	1	1	1	1	20,000
Ionics Inc.	16	17.25	15.5	15.75	2,587,300
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3	3	2.36	2.4	2,533,000
Macroasia Corp.	2.2	2.9	2.2	2.22	123,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.017	0.017	0.015	0.015	2,500,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	1,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.18	1.18	0.86	0.91	34,480,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.22	0.22	0.16	0.16	840,000
Magnum Holdings Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	10,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.82	0.82	0.66	0.67	72,850,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.64	0.66	0.54	0.55	12,670,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.4	0.42	0.36	0.37	47,690,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.48	0.68	0.48	0.52	360,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.31	0.33	0.27	0.3	11,170,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.42	1.44	45,000
Interphil Labs Inc. A	1	1.2	1	1.2	60,000
Interphil Labs Inc. B	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	30,000
Metro Alliance Holdings	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.62	5,000
Macondray Plastics Inc.	6.4	6.5	6.4	6.5	19,000
Music Corp.	4.25	4.25	3.2	3.25	4,271,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.81	0.81	0.77	0.77	1,630,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.12	0.15	0.12	0.13	4,400,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.94	0.94	0.9	0.9	720,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	9	9	8.5	8.6	1,116,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.94	0.94	0.71	0.71	4,790,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.61	0.61	0.34	0.48	20,660,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.54	0.56	0.43	0.5	5,840,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.195	0.23	0.195	0.23	320,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	56	56	48	48	2,084,400
Ayala Corp. Pref.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	50,000
DMCI Holdings, Inc- Pref.	560	600	560	600	380
Equitable PCI Bank-War	4.5	4.6	3.6	3.7	1,445,000
Globe Tel. A - Warrants	630	630	625	625	320
Globe Telecom Hldg (Pdr)	830	850	810	820	17,750
Jollibee Warrants	13.75	13.75	11	11.25	3,492,000
Macroasia Corp. Warrants	0.47	0.53	0.45	0.53	80,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0032	0.0034	0.0028	0.0028	580,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series S	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	1,900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	1,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.25	12	10.25	12	1,400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	6,900
Waterfront Phils-Warrant	0.0775	0.0775	0.019	0.019	500,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	10	10	10	10	1,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	8.2	8.2	6.9	7.1	142,561,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.36	0.4	0.36	0.37	710,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.45	0.46	0.45	0.46	530,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.29	69,430,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.49	0.49	0.39	0.4	1,790,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.47	0.5	459,970,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.06	2.06	1.78	1.94	74,604,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	200,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.2	0.24	0.17	0.18	3,740,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.43	0.54	0.42	0.43	7,160,000
Mrc Allied Ind. Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4	730,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.13	0.215	0.13	0.215	520,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.24	0.24	0.18	0.18	120,000
SM Development Corp.	1.1	1.12	1.1	1.12	350,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.1	8.1	6.7	7	132,895,000
Universal Rightfield Prop	0.115	0.13	0.11	0.11	15,800,000
Urbancorp Realty Dev. Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	70,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.005	0.006	0.005	0.006	12,000,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc B	0.0055	0.006	0.0055	0.006	32,000,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	42,000,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	6,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.018	0.018	0.017	0.018	3,500,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	100,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.21	0.23	0.21	0.23	4,530,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0065	0.0065	0.006	0.006	198,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0065	0.007	0.0065	0.0065	231,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0042	0.0044	0.0036	0.0038	724,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	7,300,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.25	1,450,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.25	0.32	0.25	0.25	3,750,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.15	0.16	0.15	0.16	250,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.021	0.03	0.021	0.023	14,800,000
Interport Res.	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	3,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	3,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0048	0.0055	0.0048	0.0055	263,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.005	0.006	0.005	0.006	25,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	230,000
Pacifica	0.018	0.021	0.016	0.018	92,900,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.105	0.105	0.1	0.1	6,000,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.19	0.2	0.19	0.2	830,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	14,007,710	762,690,090.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,772,821,800	3,970,429,925.00
PRO	911,180,000	2,414,123,320.00
Mining	1,259,886,000	8,864,750.00
OIL	408,760,000	4,329,300.00
GRAND TOTALS :	4,366,655,510	7,160,437,365.00

	AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	643.30	UP	95.86
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,336.69	UP	284.77
PRO	642.60	UP	144.39
Mining	1,327.46	UP	117.34
OIL	2.13	UP	0.37
All Shares Index	775.51	UP	11.11
Composite	1,708.06	UP	255.13

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RP not yet out of the woods, businessmen warn

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

AMID the exuberance in the currency and stock markets yesterday, local and foreign businessmen remained guardedly optimistic over the country's economic prospects because of serious challenges facing the economy.

Investment Houses Association of the Philippines president and Bank of the Philippine Islands senior vice president Senen Matoto said the country "is not yet out of the woods," as local and foreign investors were still assessing the situation.

Philam group chair and former Central Bank Governor Jose Cuisia said: "We have to understand that foreign investors would not be coming in droves immediately or within the next few months. They will wait and see how the new administration will meet the public's expectations."

But after the euphoria dies down, Cuisia said "people would realize that we still have problems with our budget deficit and banking system."

He said Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo already has his hands full with the deficit problem alone, considering he needs to generate revenues at a time when the economy is very weak. On the plus side, Cuisia said the government need not worry about the foreign exchange rate with the peso's appreciation.

The peso closed lower yesterday at 49.30 to a dollar from Friday's 47.50. The local currency leapt from 54.79 on Thursday to 47.50 on Friday after the Estrada administration collapsed following the military's defection to the camp of then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, leading to President Estrada's ouster on Saturday.

Cuisia said what was important was for the government to regain confidence using the goodwill generated from Estrada's ouster.

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DBS warns against too much euphoria

SINGAPORE—Singapore-based DBS Bank cautioned yesterday against excessive market euphoria at the downfall of Joseph Estrada, saying Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's first 100 days in office would determine investor confidence.

"Arroyo has little choice but to succeed, or else the euphoria in the market will be just a relief rally, nothing more," the bank said in a market research report.

As investors celebrated the weekend replacement of Estrada, with share prices closing 17.6 percent higher after earlier rocketing up 34.5 percent, DBS warned that the new president still had to prove herself.

"What Arroyo does and does not do over the next 100 days will determine how investors view the Philippines over the medium term.

"Judging from the euphoria in the market, the expectations are high, which leaves us cautious about large disappointments."

The DBS report said the Estrada "crisis" exacted a heavy toll on the Philippines, economically, politically and socially, and Ms Macapagal "faces the monumental task of healing the country in all aspects.

"She is likely to have a difficult time uniting the people while bringing economic recovery to the country," it said.

Despite her stellar record in terms of popularity and competence, "the people are still unsure of her ability and integrity as president. Many are still wary of her show biz personality, seeking assurances that she is indeed the smiling, gracious and kindly lady she projects herself to be."

DBS, Southeast Asia's largest banking group, saw Macapagal's campaign promises as lacking a coherent national vision, and said there was a risk of the market over-pricing the hope that she brought to the country.

"We maintain our view that Arroyo is no panacea for the acute challenges confronting the Philippines," the report said.

"Until we get a clearer picture after Arroyo's first 100 days, there is still a risk that the Philippines has stepped out of one woods into another." *AFP*

PLDT to buy ABC if GMA rejects offer

By Anthony O. Alcantara

THE PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. said yesterday it would shift its focus on Associated Broadcasting Corp. should talks to acquire GMA Network Inc. fail.

Persons familiar with the situation said PLDT, the country's No. 1 telecom company, was already preparing the final version of a memorandum of understanding to be presented to GMA, operator of Channel 7.

PLDT was supposed to submit its proposal to GMA last week, but decided to postpone it because of political uncertainties that arose from then President Joseph Estrada's Senate corruption trial.

The source said PLDT was now more confident of getting a favorable response from GMA with the "new optimism" that the new administration of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo had brought.

Another source said, however, that should GMA reject PLDT's final offer, the telecom giant would send a proposal to ABC, operator of Channel 5.

In an interview, Mediaquest Holdings Inc. president Antonio Samson refused to comment on the matter, saying negotiations were still ongoing.

"We're now moving closer to that goal (acquisition of a TV network) with a better perception of the economy," he said. "We're building up the content aspect of our convergence strategy because it's our weakest link."

Mediaquest is a subsidiary of PLDT's retirement trust fund that is working on acquiring a broadcast company for the PLDT group.

Persons familiar with the talks said PLDT wanted to acquire at least a two-thirds stake in either GMA or ABC as part of its "convergence" strategy.

"Convergence" has become a "digital-age" term that vaguely refers to the marriage of telecommunications, the Internet and broadcasting.

PLDT already has interests in two mobile phone companies, an Internet service provider and a radio station.

Persons familiar with the negotiations said PLDT was already deliberating on which television station would best help it put content for its convergence strategy.

One source said ABC had a slight advantage over GMA because it would cost less to buy the network. ABC also was more flexible than its bigger competitor, he said.

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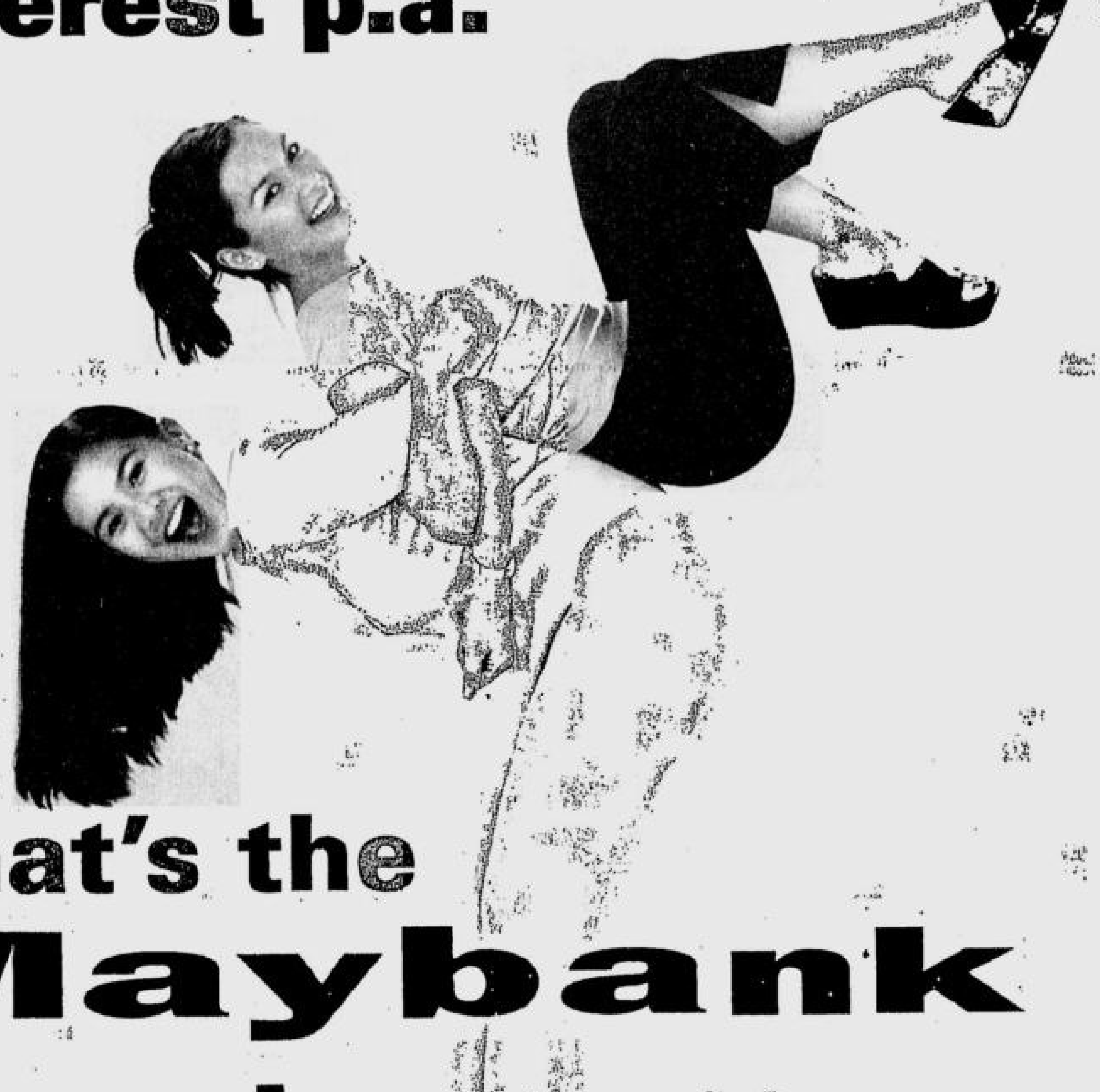

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AMPARO NEBAB BOLANTE

of
Claveria, Cagayan

Wife of the late **PABLO ALCANTARA BOLANTE, SR.**

Died in the Grace of our Lord on January 17, 2001
at 5:20 PM in LORMA MEDICAL CENTER
SAN FERNANDO CITY, LA UNION
at the age of 89.

Her bereaved children **Lydia** and **Joe** of Dallas, Texas, **Menelio** and **Eden** of New Jersey, **Elsa** and **Lorenzo** of New Jersey, **Romeo** and **Felina** of California, **Lourdes** and **Efren** of Pennsylvania, **Pablo Jr.** and **Purita** of Claveria, Cagayan, **Helen Vda. De Ledda** of Balaoan, La Union, **Henry** and **Naly** of New Jersey.

Grandchildren **Jay, Mary Ann, Shelley, Brian, Irene, Leni, Lila, Ruel, Reinel, Jerry, Gina, Efren Jr., Edgar, Alex, Lisa, Patrice, Chanda, Charisma, Cheryl, Christine, Cesar II, Charles, BJ**, and **Kristina**.

Great grandchildren **Nikko, Jarred, Jhustynn, Kenneth, Lauren, Madison, Lhoerenz**; relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at their family residence at Claveria, Cagayan.

Interment will be on Saturday, January 27, 2001 after the 9:00 AM Mass at the Claveria St. Joseph Catholic Church.

"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the Heaven; A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance..."

ERIC C. PURIFICACION

Passed away after an untimely accident
on Monday, 22 January 2001,
at the age of 33.

His loving parents **Cora** and **Elias Purificacion**; his brother **Jess**; sister-in-law **Ruth**; and nephew **Jacob**; his sister **Ana Ruth**; and brother-in-law **Jojo Conde**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Parish Church of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary (Twin Hearts), Bulletin Street, West Triangle, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday morning, 28 January 2001. The exact time will be announced later.

BENITA PEPAN CARAG

Widow of the late **QUIRICO TAN CARAG**

Peacefully joined our Lord on January 19, 2001
at the age of 93.

Her beloved children **NAP** and **VIOLY**, **JOSEPHINE** and **VAL RAZ**, **TONY** and **CHARING**, **LEONOR**, **EVANGELINE** and **ELY DEL MUNDO** and **MARITA**; grandchildren, great grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Thursday, January 25, 2001 at Holy Cross Memorial Park, Novaliches, Quezon City after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at Funeraria Paz Chapel.

DR. ROMEO R. SAN DIEGO

Peacefully joined our Creator on Saturday, January 20, 2001
at the age of 60.

His loving wife **Dra. Nenita G. Mauricio-San Diego**; children **Edwin, Mari Fay** and **Roel**; daughter-in-law **Mabel**; grandchildren **JB, Erika,** and **Eric** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at their residence at #43 Sampaguita St., Violeta Village, Sta. Cruz, Guiguinto, Bulacan.

Interment will be on Wednesday, January 24, 2001 at the Endless Love Memorial Park after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at the Holy Family Chapel in Violeta Village, Sta. Cruz, Guiguinto, Bulacan.

"I am the resurrection and life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever believes in Me will never die."
John 11:25-26

BENJAMIN DAYRIT DIZON

. Peacefully joined his Creator on January 19, 2001 at the age of 73.

His bereaved wife **Marita** and daughter **Marfee**; sisters and brother **Josefina** (†) and **Miguel Dizon** (†), **Maria** and **Armando** (†) **Gamboa, Ildefonso** (†) and **Amelia Dizon, Maura** (†) and **Manuel Lazatin**; stepmother-in-law **Cleofe C. Hizon**; brothers- and sisters-in-law request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at Mt. Carmel Shrine, Doña Juana Rodriguez Avenue, New Manila, Quezon City.

Cremation will follow after the 9:00 a.m. Mass on Wednesday, January 24, 2001.

In lieu of flowers, donations for the Balitucan High School in Magalang, Pampanga will be greatly appreciated.

Misael Echevarria Cabrera

Of Cansojong, Talisay Cebu and Suba Dimasalang Masbate

Peacefully joined his Creator on January 21, 2001 at the age of 83.

Former Mayor Dimasalang Masbate and **Provincial Board Member Masbate.**

His loving wife, the late **Salvacion Diel Cabrera**; his children **Percival** (†) and **Norma, Confucius** and **Nora, Marcella** and **Vicente Jr., Irbi** and **Jose** (USA), **Sheba, Darwin** and **Carolina**; brothers **Marciano, Simplicio** and **Benilda**; sister **Nicolasa** and **Primo Belleza**; sisters-in-law **Efrenia Manlangit, Melitona Leyson,** and **Lourdes** and **Francisco Esclamado**; nephews, nieces, grandchildren and great grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at Nacional Memorial Homes, Quezon City. Interment will be at the Himlayang Pilipino Park on Thursday, January 25, 2001 after the 12:00 noon Mass by the Philippine Independent Church.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord."
2 Corinthians 5:8

Reynaldo "Rene" S. Villarubin, Sr.

Peacefully joined our Lord on January 21, 2001 at the age of 69.

His loving wife **Maria**; sons and daughters **Rey** and **Susan**, **Alex** and **Connie**, **Ogie**; grandchildren **Andrêl**, **Cid**, **Buboy**, **Patty**, **Tim**; other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, along Sucat Road, Parañaque City.

Cremation will be on Wednesday, January 24, 2001, 2:00 PM, at the Manila Memorial Park.

Jose Sanglap Velmonte, Jr.

September 17, 1933 - January 21, 2001
has joined his Creator on the 21st of January 2001.

His bereaved wife **Mely**, children **Maria Teresa** and **Edgardo Planes**, **Jose Manuel**, **Maria Xenia**, **Paul** and **Jingle**, **Peter**, **Mary Rose**, his sisters **Cel** and **Lita**, and grandchildren request everyone to pray for his eternal soul.

His remains lie in state at Chapel A-3 of Funeraria Paz along Araneta Avenue and will be cremated on January 25, Thursday at 9:00 in the morning.

"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in Me will never die."

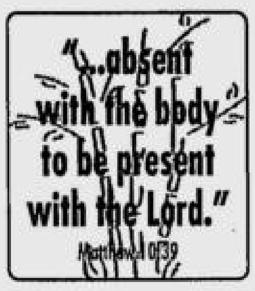
John 11: 25-26

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

Marilyn Cajator Herrera

who joined our Creator on January 14, 2001 at the age of 51, sincerely wish to convey our deepest gratitude and appreciation to all our relatives & friends who took the time out to convey their condolences, offered flowers, masses, visited, kept vigil, attended the funeral rites and condoled with us in countless ways during our moment of grief.



"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord."
Matthew 10:39

"Though I walk in the valley of darkness, I fear no evil for You are with me."

MARIS DELFIN-CRISOSTOMO

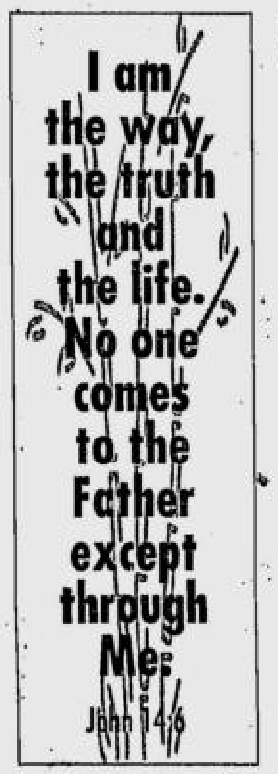
Peacefully joined her Creator on January 22, 2001 at the age of 45.

Her bereaved husband **Carlos**; children **Angela**, **Carl** and **Agoo**; parents **Ramon** (†) and **Sagrario**; brothers and sisters **Charito**, **Baby** (†), **Doddy** and **Luisa**, **Elena** and **Rico De Leon**, **Viqui** and **Tito Fernandez**, **Aidge** and **Monchie Henares**; nephews, nieces, relatives and friends request pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Willmann Chapel, Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Dr. A. Santos Avenue, Sucat, Parañaque City.

Cremation shall take place on January 25, 2001 at the Crematorium of the Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque immediately following the 9 o'clock a.m. Funeral Mass at the Parish of the Presentation of the Child Jesus, Aguirre Avenue, BF homes, Parañaque City.

To all of you who may have helped our beloved Maris in her time of need by providing comfort, donating blood or by their mere presence, our heartfelt thanks.



I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.
John 14:6

The Board of Directors
Management and Staff of
Valueline Systems and Solutions Corp.
Regret the untimely demise of

GARY TIU UY

Founder and Chief Operating Officer

on January 20, 2001 at the age of 35.

His remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

He is survived by his wife **Maggie**; son **M.J.**; mother **Irene** and sister **Menjie** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Interment wil be on Thursday, January 25, 2001, 8:00 a.m. at Eternal Memorial Gardens.

We design OBITUARIES for free.

"My journey is over now. I rest in peace of God, my Father into your hands, dear Lord I commend my soul Thy will be done."

Our Beloved Mother

MARIA de LARA DE LA CUESTA

of Sarrat, Ilocos Norte

Peacefully joined her Creator on January 21, 2001 at the age of 81.

Her loving children **LOUELLA**, the late **Dr. GERUNCIO dela Cuesta**, **ELMER**, **MARIELOU**, **BERNADETTE**, **REX**; her brother **ESCOLASTICO de LARA**; sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, grandchildren, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends request the pious readers to join us in our prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, 112 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, September 27, 2001 at the Himlayang Pilipino after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

In Loving Memory
on the First Death Anniversary of

EDILBERTA PALLINGAYAN FOZ

Who died in the Grace of our Lord on January 22, 2000.

Her loving husband and children would like to thank friends and relatives who supported us during our bereavement.

ADORACION D. QUIMORA

of Poblacion, Mandaluyong City

Passed away peacefully in the Grace of our Lord and joined her husband Manuel (†) on January 21, 2001 at the age of 67.

Her bereaved family: sons **Arnold** and **Dennis**; daughters-in-law **Ma. Leonora** and **Ma. Theresa**; grandchildren **Dorothy Leonor**, **Frances Anne**, and **Lawrence Gabriel**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.
Her remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.
Interment will be announced later.

MILAGROS FLOR MAGLEO

(widow of the late **Ricardo G. Magleo**)

of San Carlos City, Pangasinan

Peacefully returned to her Creator on January 20, 2001 at the age of 89 after receiving the Last Sacrament.

Her children **Dr. Mario** and **Wenonch**, **Evelyn** and **Rosemero**, **Lilian** and **Alex**, **Eleanor** and **Manny**, **Wilbur** and **Irene**, **Gideon** and **Grace**, **Donald** and **Sonia**, **Alvin** and **Leah**, **Cecille** and **Craig**, **Dra. Lourdes** and **Dr. Crisanto**, **Armand** and **Aying**; grandchildren, great grandchildren; Bro. **Dr. Floro Flor**; sister **Generosa**; in-laws **Rose** and **Dominador**; nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at #22 Palaris Street, San Carlos City, Pangasinan.

Interment will be on Sunday, January 28, 2001 at the San Carlos City Cemetery after the 9:00 a.m. Holy Mass at the St. Dominic Parish Church.

GK Victor B. Jongko

Died in the Grace of our Lord on January 20, 2001 at the age of 49.

His dearest mother **Leandra**; brothers **Dr. Teodoro**, **Engr. Joventito**, **Engr. Castor Jr.**, **Engr. Nestor**, **Engr. Julius**; sisters **Marilyn** (†), **Joannie**, **Ophelia**; in-laws, nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Chapel 15, La Funeraria Paz, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be announced later.

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The PNOC Coal Corporation (PNOC-CC) invites prequalified accredited contractors to submit sealed bids for the:

SECURITY SERVICES FOR PCC PORO COAL TERMINAL (PCC 00-018 B2)

Bid documents may be secured from the Administrative Department (c/o Mr. George N. Alejandro) starting January 25, 2001 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PESOS: Five Hundred (P500.00).

Sealed bids in two (2) sets shall be received by the Administrative Department not later than 2:00 o'clock PM of February 6, 2001 and then publicly opened at 2:30 PM of the same date at the above address.

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **February 8, 2001, 2:00 PM at the PNOC-CC Conference Room, Building 2, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila.**

PNOC-CC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, or to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder/s whose bid/s is/are considered most advantageous to PNOC-CC.

(Sgd.) **FERNANDO C. VILLANUEVA**
Chairman
Prequalification, Bidding and Awards Committee

(PDI -- Jan. 23, 2001)

PNOC COAL CORPORATION

Building 2, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
Telephone Nos. 893-1320, 893-6001; Fax No. (632) 817-1241

INVITATION TO BID

The PNOC Coal Corporation (PNOC-CC) invites prequalified accredited contractors to submit sealed bids for the:

ON-CALL COAL HANDLING SERVICES (PCC 00-010)

Bid documents may be secured from the Administrative Department (c/o Mr. George N. Alejandro) starting January 17, 2001 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PESOS: Five Hundred (P500.00).

Sealed bids in two (2) sets shall be received by the Administrative Department not later than 2:00 o'clock PM of February 6, 2001 and then publicly opened at 2:30 PM of the same date at the above address.

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **January 26, 2001, 2:00 PM at the PNOC-CC Conference Room, Building 2, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila.**

PNOC-CC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, or to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder/s whose bid/s is/are considered most advantageous to PNOC-CC.

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**Le Domaine 2br 2tb 1pkg R/S Salcedo V 535-8356

PARKLANE SALCEDO 3BR 135sqm 5.5M Fur 915-5177

Wanted 2 Buy!
PACIFIC PLAZA
Ayala Mktl 3Br Price 22M 842-1571 / 0919-2061384

MANILA

**Pasay FA158m^2 New 5.5M Nr Zamora 4br 413-4411

MANDALUYONG

**Pioneer Highlands Studio 31m^2 P2M 671-4421

**Pioneer Highlands 2br 1cg P3.3M 671-4421

**Wack Twin 3br FF 1br Condo 7232391

PASIG

715m^2 Luna Mencias nr. Araullo P29T/m^2 4157979

B/New TH 2 stry/3BR/1CG 60-75m^{2}P1.9M 4157979

QUEZON CITY

**Blueridge Bnew Nr C5 3br 2tb P6.5M 671-4421

CubaoCondoP1.3M "EZ"Terms nego discounts 9120647 9132224 4381480

Fairview 3BR 2TB 1CG Rene 150347915 / 4382966

NARRA HTS. MARIPOSA 3BR Renovated • 915-5177

VL nr SM Fairview P4,500 /M^2 RUSH 700m^2 4157979

WOODSIDE NMLA 2-3BR 915-5177 • 0917-5325440

[illegible]

**G'hills Condo 1br FA58 P3M 723-2391

**G'hills Condo 3br P5.5M w/ Huge Blcony 7232391

G'hills Eisenhower St., 3BR Condo P6-8M • 723-2391

G'hills Ofc Condo 70m^2 w/ Parking FFur P3.1M 723-2391

**G'Hills Twnhse 3br FA180 2car Grg 7232391 P6.8M

**G'Hils Annapolis Condo 3br P9M 7232391

SAN JUAN CONDO 3BR 137sqm P4M • 723-2391

MEMORIAL LOT

Loy Mkna Lot 8386645/52

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

APARTMENT

KALOOCAN

STD 3T 7th Ave. 3620065

QUEZON CITY

4Rent Roxas Dist 415-3689

New Apt. P8000/P1000 @mo. T. Sora / Proj.8, QC 926-9515

HOUSE

MAKATI

MAGALLANES BUNG 3BR 1DN NWLY RENOV POOL 7337623-03 OFF HRS.

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

CONDO/TWNHSE

MAKATI

Parklane Salcedo 2br 30T 915-5177 • 0917-5325440

QUEZON CITY

P5,500/mo.CUBAO Call 911-3361 / 454-4005

WOODSIDE NEW MANILA 641-9346 • 0917-5325440

SAN JUAN

**G'Hills Sev Studio 3br P18-40T 7232391

ROOM & BOARD

Near DLSU/Quirino Ave., Call 5235465 / 5238761

Rm. Cubao Stmg H20 9124106 Ldies Only

LOAN & MORTGAGE

1.6 Monthly QC=3730239/40 Las Pinas=5433191 & 9895 Makati=8976644 to 46 LLOYDS FINANCING CORP.

BUSINESS RENTAL

P1,800/mo Stalls Malate T-400-6420/23

**Citibank Ctr Paseo Mktl Sale/Rent 200m^2 535-8356

MALATE G/F OFF. 5268048

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

CARS

HONDA

RUSHI '99 Accord VTIL MT 7.6Tkm P820T T#434-1398

HYUNDAI

94 Grace 200T 731-3492

98 Grace 280T 731-3492

RUSHI '98 Starex 11str AT 31Tkm P420T T#434-1398

[illegible]

Decta 200-275T 731-3482

[illegible]

98 MB100D 400T 731-3492

TOYOTA

**93 Corolla Gli 1St Ownr 79 Crown 35T 725-4384

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CARS FOR RENT

L3•Cars• 9273453 4538295

Bnew L300 8261045 8254058

Van Coaster Bus 440-91-71

CARS•VANS•8978113•8955888 BUS•CSTER•BRIDAL•8969956

Hiace L300 Urvan 8257135

L300 T 4161105 / 7411355

L300 Versa Van 578-8917

MB100 Hi-Ace Starex 9483535

STAREX L3 9121809/7268388

Sunflower Transport Starex, L300, Coaster Bus Cars 637-7396 631-3496

UDrive w/drivr Cars/L300/ MB/4x4/Bus 8908667-69

CAR LOAN

1.5% Fast Car Loan 3677523-24

1.6 Monthly QC=3730239/40 Las Pinas=5433191 & 9895 Makati=8976644 to 46 LLOYDS FINANCING CORP.

2% w/o taking car 7262780

2% w/o Taking Car 3670169

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Labor and Employment
OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH CENTER
North Avenue, cor. Science Road
Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID

The Occupational Safety and Health Center (OSHC) invites all interested suppliers to submit sealed quotation within two (2) weeks from the date of publication for the following equipment:

1. Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometer
2. Water Purification System
3. Fourier Transform Infrared Spectrophotometer
4. Chemistry Analyzer

Interested parties may contact the Supply Officer for the requirements needed at telephone numbers 927-0862 and 929-6036 to 39 local 306.

The OSHC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect therein and accept bid(s) or offer(s) which may be considered advantageous to the government.

(sgd.) DR. DULCE P. ESTRELLA-GUST
Executive Director

(PDI - Jan. 21, 22 & 23 2001)

ERRATUM

In the announcement list of the participating companies at **Glorietta Mini Job Fair** yesterday, **January 22, 2001** on **page B14**, the company **Peoples Support** should be spelled as **PEOPLESUPPORT**, we regret the error.

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

SPORTING GOODS

Billiard P25T & P30T All Marble Top New 781-9453

B.Table B'new /Accessories •801-4494/802-0566•

Imported Billiard, P-Pong, Foosball, Hockey Tables Call 367-3784 to 88

Imported Billiards Complete Acc Free Delivery & Install'n 8618714 to 16; 8613123

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BUYING ROLEX others, High Price CASH CALL 09178142309/7269687

DEFECT TV/COMPO 7325865

H.S./COLLEGE PLAN G Lopez 7137284

WE BUY ROLEX 5633742 5646593 09174383744

Stainless Fshball-Sfdtdrnk Cart P12T Call 2815233

MISCELLANEOUS

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE

Ofc Staff 9134470 Bong

FEMALE

CASHIERS need immediately Q.C. res. pref. 2nd yr coll. • Call 823-4573 to 74 •

DOMESTIC HELPER Famly Nurse 303-9476/5623962

MAIDS Direct Hire 7284971

Office Staff 913-4470 Mean

SECRETARY at least 2nd yr collge 20-27yrs old computer literate. Apply at 57 P.Tuazon St Cubao Call 4485096/4168143

MALE/FEMALE

CARE GIVER T-5280730

CHEF For MACAO 7yrs exp in Italian Cuisine. Send a copy of your Curriculum Vitae w work exp, Criminal Record & Contact no.@ 00853751327

★ IMMIGRATE ★ LIVE and WORK in CANADA 8175511/8944950

Ofl Staff 9134470 Edward

Office Staff 913-4470 Arnel

Office Staff 935-3453 Jade

Wanted: RESTAURANT NUTRITIONIST Call JP Lazaro 240-3265

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE/FEMALE

WASHINGTON TUTORIAL CTR. English Teacher 8259804

PUBLIC NOTICES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

EARN DOLLARS WEEKLY! Check it out at www.reachindex.com/goodboytol or Call 0917-8986655, 928-4431

RTW Cash/Consign 3738821

•EARN $3000/WK• Attend Our Free Seminar Call for Reservation • 09197189728 •

EARN FROM HOME. TRAVEL OPPORT. ROGER 578-8917

ESSENTIAL SEMINAR FOR THOSE WHO INTEND TO WORK ABROAD Phone: 891 5602 & 891 5632 OFFICE HOURS: 9am-6pm MONDAY - FRIDAY

★ IMMIGRATE ★ LIVE and do business in CANADA 8175511/8944950

JEWELRY NO CAPITAL CONSIGN Term Must be Employed 2929084

PEARL PLAZA MALL Tambo Pque 'Tiange' BAZAAR semi or permanent spaces available CHEAP 7154492• 7134204•7131423 for appt.

RTW / Underwear 723-2959

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that estate of the late BLAS LABA was extrajudicially settled w/ waiver of rights per Doc.2271 Pg393 BkXIX Series 2000 Atty. Ernesto M. Prias of Antipolo City PDI-Jan.9,16 & 23,2001

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given of the loss of the PETRON CORP. stock certificates to wit: DOMINGO DACOME SAY Stck. cert#0388204, 1600 shrs; 0640540, 400 shrs; 1171486, 500 shrs; 1390980, 500 shrs; CARIDAD MENDOZA SAY Stck. Cert.#0388203, 1600 shrs; 0640537, 400 shrs; 1171483, 500 shrs; 1390978, 500 shrs *(PDI-Jan. 23, 30 & Feb. 6, 2001)*

PERSONAL

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT
Holy Spirit thou who make me see everything and show me the way to reach my ideal. You who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and who are in all instances of my life with me. I, in this short dialogue, want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You, no matter how great the material desires may be. I want to be with You and my loved ones in Your Perpetual Glory. Amen.

CABLE ADDRESS MWSS PH

Republic of the Pilipinas
PANGASIWAAN NG TUBIG AT
ALKANTARILYA SA METRO MANILA
Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System
Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City 1105, Philippines

12 January 2001

INVITATION FOR QUALIFICATION AND BIDS

(Two-Envelope System)

A. Contract Nos. DS-6 (Package A to D) & DS-7 Proposed Construction of New Water Distribution Mains in Quezon City

B. Contract No. NC-06-CEP-005-00 (Package B, C & D) Proposed Replacement of Existing Water Main Lines in Tondo Sector, Manila (under ANRP)

The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) thru its west zone concessionaire, MAYNILAD WATER SERVICES, INC. (MWSI) will undertake the construction of the above contract packages under the Angat Water Supply Optimization Project (AWSOP) which will be financed in part by funds from Loan No. 986-PHI of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to the National Government and allocated to the MWSS as equity. It is intended that part of each Contractor's progress billing under the contracts for which this invitation for Qualification and Bids is issued will be paid directly by the Bank. The works for these projects shall include but is not limited to the supply of all labor, materials and equipment for the proposed construction of new water distribution mains for Contract Nos. DS-6 (Package A to D) & DS-7 and; replacement of existing pipelines through combination of open cut and trenchless pipe laying methods for Contract No. NC-06-CEP-005 (Package B, C and D) as follows:

Contract No./ Location	Pipe Size	Pipe Length (m)	Project Cost Estimate (Php)	Contract Duration
1. DS-6A / Quezon City	150mmØ PVC to 500mmØ SP.	4,436	26,498,750.00	120
2. DS-6B / Quezon City	300mmØ CI to 500mmØ SP	4,372	33,671,512.00	120
3. DS-6C / Quezon City	150mmØ PVC to 500mmØ SP	6,469	31,680,737.00	120
4. DS-6D / Quezon City	150mmØ PVC to 500mmØ SP	2,759	18,129,579.05	100
5. DS-7 / Quezon City	300mmØ PVC to 400mmØ SP	3,850	23,583,647.00	100
6. NC-06-CEP-005-00 package B/ Tondo, Mla.	100mmØ PVC to 600mmØ SP	4,810	26,000,000.00	120
7. NC-06-CEP-005-00 package C/ Tondo, Mla.	150mmØ PVC to 250mmØ CI/DI	5,625	30,000,000.00	120
8. NC-06-CEP-005-00 package D/ Tondo, Mla.	150mmØ PVC to 200mmØ PVC	5,860	28,000,000.00	120

Bidding is open to contractors and joint ventures of contractors who have previous experience with similar works.

All affiliated companies of MWSI are disqualified to bid. Affiliated companies are those over which the concessionaire exercises control of voting stocks or which operate with them as part of a system or enterprise. They shall include, but not be limited to those corporations which are subsidiaries owned or controlled by the concessionaire, or corporations in which the concessionaire has substantial interest.

Bidders may bid on any or all of the above contract packages tabulated above but award of contract will be limited to two (2) contract packages per bidder.

Interested eligible bidders will be required to submit their accomplished qualification document and bids at the same time in two (2) separate sealed envelopes. The envelope containing the bid will be kept in a sealed box which will not be opened until after the completion of the qualification evaluation and the list of qualified bidders has been finalized and approved by the MWSS Board of Trustees. Only the bids of qualified bidders will be opened on the date of bid opening which will be announced later. The bids of the disqualified bidders will be returned unopened.

A complete set of bid documents may be purchased from the address below starting 16 January 2001 upon payment of non-refundable fee of Three Thousand Pesos (P3,000.00) for each contract package.

CAC SECRETARIAT
MAYNILAD WATER SERVICES, INC.
2nd Floor Engineering Bldg., MWSI Office
MWSS Compound, Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City

The accomplished qualification documents and bids in two (2) separate sealed envelopes must be submitted at the office of the MWSS PBAC/CSTE, Engineering/ Operations Building, MWSS, Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City on or before 2:00 p.m. of 14 February 2001. Late bids will not be accepted. The official time shall be based on the bundy clock located at the office of the MWSS PBAC SECRETARIAT.

Goods and services to be supplied under these contracts must have their origin from countries defined in the "Guidelines for procurement under the ADB Loans".

(Sgd.) **JOSE F. MABANTA**
Administrator

(PDI - Jan. 19, 23 & 27, 2001)

Office of the President
BCDA
Bases Conversion Development Authority

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY TO SUBMIT PROPOSAL

The Bases Conversion Development Authority invites interested Banks with a valid trust license from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to submit Application to Prequalify and subsequently to bid, if pre-qualified as Bond Agent for the issuance of bonds to selected investors to finance BCDA infrastructure projects.

The Bond agent shall, among others, collect interest and principal repayment as well as be responsible for servicing the bond to the bondholders.

Copies of the Pre-qualification Forms will be available from January 25 to 26, 2001 upon submission of Letter of Intent to the Chairman, Prequalification Evaluation and Award Committee (PEAC) and payment of a non-refundable fee of Pesos: One thousand (Php 1,000.00) at the BCDA Corporate Center, Gozar corner Lucas Streets, Villamor Air Base, Pasay City. Deadline for submission of duly accomplished forms shall be on 29 January 2001, no later than 5:00 PM.

BCDA deserves the right to reject any or all applications for prequalification and proposals or to waive any defect or require formality therein, and to award the project to the proponent whose proposal is most advantageous to BCDA.

Should you need any clarification regarding the project, you may get in touch with Ms. Hedda Y. Rulona, Tel. No. 551-3006 up to 11.

(Sgd.) **ANTONIO REX CHAN**
Chairman, Pre-qualification Evaluation and Award Committee

(PDI – Jan. 23 & 24, 2001)

Office of the President
BCDA
Bases Conversion Development Authority

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY TO SUBMIT PROPOSAL

The Bases Conversion Development Authority invites interested legal firms to submit Application to Prequalify and subsequently to bid, if pre-qualified as Legal Counsel for the BCDA Bond Floatation Program to finance BCDA infrastructure projects.

The Legal Counsel will assist BCDA in the issuance of bonds in the following areas: (a) preparation of pertinent documents/agreements, (b) provision of advice with regard to information being disclosed/used for bond issuance, (c) secure rulings, opinions, or clearances from pertinent government agencies, (d) negotiation with underwriters, (e) advice on tax matters, and (f) legal advice on all stages and in all aspects on bond issuance.

Copies of the Pre-qualification Forms will be available from January 25 to 26, 2001 upon submission of Letter of Intent to the Chairman, Prequalification Evaluation and Award Committee (PBAC) and payment of a non-refundable fee of Pesos: One thousand (Php 1,000.00) at the BCDA Corporate Center, Cozar corner Lucas Streets, Villamor Air Base, Pasay City. Deadline for submission of duly accomplished forms shall be on 29 January 2001, no later than 5:00 PM.

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(Sgd.) **ANTONIO REX CHAN**
Chairman, Pre-qualification Evaluation and Award Committee

(PDI – Jan. 23 & 24, 2001)

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www.jobmarketonline.com

Global construction experts to speak at Worldbex seminars

THE WORLD'S authorities in building and construction will soon converge in the Philippines to speak in the 3rd "Worldbex Seminars 2001" to be held at the Century Park Hotel, Manila, on March 15 and 16 this year.

This lecture series, which is in line with the global construction trade exposition Worldbex 2001 slated on March 14 to 18 at the World Trade Center Metro Manila, will cover various fields of construction and allied industries.

The Worldbex super-expo is organized by Worldbex Services International in cooperation with the Philippine Institute of Interior Designers and the Filipino Professional Architects. It enjoys the strong support of the US Commercial Service, European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines and 22 local industry associations. Likewise; it expects 35,000 attendees and over 500 exhibitors from the United States, Europe, Asia, Canada, South America, Africa and Australia.

Power-packed seminars.

According to WSI founding president Joseph Ang, the seminar series is dubbed as the industry's most power-packed seminar series of the year and is open to architects, engineers, interior designers and all other construction industry professionals, including those who are not members of any organization.

"To come up with an even bigger and better seminar series, we have invited the world's top construction experts from various countries to discuss topics which are of immediate concern to the global construction industry," Ang revealed. "This year's topics will be in line with the Worldbex 2001 theme "Spelling the Difference in Global Construction," he added.

Speakers

The highly regarded speakers in Worldbex 2001 seminar series include Prof. Bruce A. Etherington, Graduate Studies chair of the School of Architecture of the University of Hawaii (USA), who will speak on "Regional City and Community Restorative Measures"; Vincent Rowan, a partner in Masons International Law Firm (UK), who will talk about "International Contracting—New Projects, Old Lessons";

Dr. Manfred Adamer, head of marketing in Crystal Architecture at D. Swarovski & Co. (Austria), on "Fiber Optics in Lighting Esthetics"; Dr. Ken Yeang, principal architect of T.R. Hamzah & Yeang Sdn. Bhd. (Malaysia), on "The Ecological Design of Large Buildings and Sites: Theory and Experiment"; Joseph Wong, lecturer at City University of Hong Kong, on "Prefabrication, Modularity and Flexibility in Housing Design";Paul Katz, principal architect of Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates, PC (USA), on "Trends in Global Architecture—Hyperdensity"; Alfred Abrahamsohn, senior and chief executive director of Bentel Abramson & Partners Ltd. (South Africa), on "Retail, Entertainment and Leisure Environments: A South African Architectural Perspective";

Prof. Stefano Francesco Musso, associate professor of Architectural Restoration in the University of Genoa (Italy), on "Preservation and Restoration of Ancient Buildings"; Valeriano Abeng, founding president of Philippine Association of Building Administrators and Condominium Management Association of the Philippines, on "An Overview of the Building Management Industry in the Philippines" and engineer Ernesto Battad Sr. of the National Master Plumbers of the Philippines, on "Plumbing Engineering—A Vital Expertise in Philippine Construction Technology."

"This year's lecture series rides on the success of the previous Worldbex seminars, which were participated in by hundreds of industry professionals," Ang said.

NOW OPEN FOR VIEWING

Interested homebuyers at the Laguna BelAir 3, the newest expansion phase of the popular township developed by Empire East Land Holdings Inc. in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, may now check out the architecture and interior design suggestions for the four new house designs—Aubrey, Brenna, Chloe and Daphne—to be made available in the project. Shown is the living room area for Audrey. The 10 newly constructed model homes at the site, spaciously planned with up to 105 square meters in floor area, represent the fully furnished and standard unfurnished versions of each of the new designs as well as those of the popular Francine models made available in previous phases.

Housing agency processes reduced

THE HOUSING and Urban Development Coordinating Council said it has reformed and redefined the processes and systems of the government shelter sector for the benefit of the various stakeholders to avoid the problems of the past.

Among the first steps taken by the HUDCC was to set time limits for the issuance of housing permits so that delays will no longer be passed on by developers to buyers. This is contained in Executive Order No. 258.

HUDCC chair Leonora V. de Jesus said this move is expected to reduce the number of days needed to obtain the necessary housing permits from more than two years in the past to only 183 working days.

At the same time, the housing agency allowed the processing of applications for certificates of registration or licenses to sell for subdivisions or condominium projects pending the release of environmental compliance certificates and survey plans by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The new rule is expected to reduce the 30-day processing period by two weeks

De Jesus revealed that the HUDCC is now consulting with other agencies on the amended minimum design standards of Presidential Decree 957, dated July 12, 1976, which regulates the sale of subdivision lots and condominium units.

She said her agency is reviewing Batas Pambansa 220, issued March 25, 1982, which allows different levels of standards and technical requirements for economic and socialized housing projects.

The draft revised standards include new price ceilings of housing packages and a section on right-or-way based on project size and density levels.

De Jesus also established a new system of regular review on the performance and financial conditions of the housing corporations

To promote greater transparency in the books of accounts of the government shelter sector, the HUDCC forged an agreement with the Commission on Audit to clean up the books of accounts of the Home Development Mutual Fund, National Housing Authority and the National Home Mortgage Finance Corp.

PROPOSED BUCKINGHAM HILLS CLUBHOUSE
CARMONA VENTURES AND RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT CORP.

CLUBHOUSE SOON TO RISE

Ted Baker, far left, design and planning consultant of J. Reynolds Properties based in Atlanta, United States. Presents the master plan for the clubhouse of Buckingham Hills, a 13-hectare premiere residential development located along the National Road in Taal, Batangas. A development of Carmona Ventures and Resources Development Corp., Buckingham Hills will have an activity center that will include pools, sports areas, playground, and jogging lanes. With Baker are, from left, Noli Atienza of MS Atienza Realty, CVRDC vice president Ryan Bagatsing, engineers Pete Nugal and Freddie Casuyon, CVRDC president Roy Bagatsing, administrative officer Rudy Navarro and project architect Alden Bolinas.

MGS load-bearing blocks make homes affordable

IN THE PHILIPPINES, home ownership is a symbol of success. To Filipinos it is the most basic need as it gives them a sense of pride, security and achievement. The first thing that a married couple does is to save up for a home.

Given the present circumstances, buying a home is almost an impossible dream for the majority. Those who can concretize their dream look for affordable ways and means to be able to build a decent home.

MGS has all the answers to people searching for cheaper ways to home building. One of its bestseller products is the MGS Besser Blocks that has revolutionized the method of housing construction with the modular block housing system.

This MGS Besser Modular Blocks Housing System works like a lego construction set complete with stretcher, L-corner beam, half and lintel blocks. The modularity and high-load bearing capability of MGS Besser Blocks eliminates the use of posts and beams.

MGS Besser Blocks are effective in residential, commercial and industrial applications.

Besser is a leader of concrete masonry in the United States and most parts of the world for more than 90 years.

MGS Corporation has installed five Besser Bescopac concrete block machines in its two plants in Bulacan and Cavite. Technical support is being provided by the Besser Co. through its offices in the region.

Because MGS modular blocks puts the load on the wall, not on posts and beams, construction costs and completion time in home building is decreased by 20 percent.

Among the load-bearing blocks in the Philippines, MGS Besser Blocks has superior quality. Compared to other so-called bearing blocks. MGS Besser Blocks has double (3,000 psi) the load-bearing capacity. Other blocks have only a maximum of 1,500 psi. Unlike other blocks, MGS Besser Blocks have very smooth quality and are very dense at 145 pcf. The blocks are precision shape, highly compacted and load bearing. Modularity is assured.

MGS Besser Blocks has a monthly production capacity of 1.5-million blocks, making it the largest product of quality load bearing modular concrete blocks. Its products have been certified by the Philippine Domestic Construction Board of the DTI to have conformed to modular coordination standards.

HIGH COURT RULING TODAY

Gov't records belie OSG's claims

THE SUPREME Court is set to issue its ruling today on whether to overturn the unanimous decision of its Third Division regarding the ownership of a large tract of land in Las Piñas city being claimed by the government and Chinese businessman Mariano Nocom.

Government records belie the claim of the Office of the Solicitor General that the 99.6-hectare property in Barangay Tindig na Mangga "could not have been titled in 1929 as the area was still part of unclassified forestland and was not declassified as alienable."

The OSG issued this contention to the Supreme Court supposedly in a bid to recover the land for the government from its private owners including the family.

Documents

But the Espinosas refuted the OSG's claim and showed documents as evidence that Las Piñas was not the forest that the government lawyers had pictured it to be.

The documents included a certification from the Registry of Deeds in Pasig on the various land titles issued before World War II and which covered Las Piñas. The list even included land titles issued earlier than 1928, when original certificate of title (OCT) 4216 was awarded to its original owners.

Valid and genuine

It was from OCT 42169, which has been affirmed four times by the Supreme Court as valid and genuine, that the land titles of the Espinosas and other individuals were derived when they acquired the property in 1956 from Veronica Gana, the daughter of original registered owners Lorenzo Gana and Juliana Carlos.

Since then, the Espinosas and other owners have been paying realty taxes for their portion of the property, which they have enclosed with a concrete fence.

Surprisingly however, a Chinese-owned firm suddenly surfaced later, claiming ownership of around 18 hectares of the entire property based on another land title, OCT A-S 47, purportedly issued on July 22, 1969, by the Registry of Deeds of Rizal.

Nullified

Nonetheless, OCT A-S 47 of Firestone Ceramics, which is owned by Nocom, has been nullified by the Supreme Court in favor of OCT 4216 of the Espinosas and many other individual owners.

But after the Supreme Court had nullified Firestone's alleged title to 18 hectares of the property, the OSG suddenly came into the picture, asserting government ownership of all the 99 hectares.

Hence, Firestone and the OSG have allied themselves in asking the SC to reverse its unanimous decision on Sept. 2, 1999, upholding the validity of OCT 4216.

That decision, however, is seen to have highlighted the Supreme Court's sense of justice and fair play, acknowledging the historic right of pioneering landowners and protecting the integrity of hundreds of thousands of land titles not just in Las Piñas but also in Quezon City, Marikina and many other parts of Metro Manila.

Questions

During a full-court hearing of the high tribunal last Oct. 17, questions were raised on why the controversial Las Piñas land had been singled out for reversion or cancellation by the OSG from among the 13,000 hectares in Rizal and Cavite provinces that were likewise the subject of an administrative order.

"Even the properties of the Ayalas, the Legardas and other historically landed families would be affected. That includes those who may have bought lands from them. All in all, the case may involve probably hundreds of thousands of residents, especially the less privileged among them," the lawyers of the Espinosas later said.

Firestone and another Nocom-owned firm are reportedly involved in several other land cases, including the purchase of a government property for an allegedly measly sum.

ALSONS LAND CORPORATION
A Subsidiary of Alsons Consolidated Resources
joins
Honorable Guests & Friends
in the
of Titles
28 October
Eagle Ridge
General

DOCUMENTS HANDOVER

Alsons Land Corp. president Tomas Alcantara hands over the turnover documents for the Barangay Multipurpose Halls and Chapel to Barangay Javalera chair Jessie Patam. The structures were built by the firm for the benefit of the former tenants of Eagle Ridge Golf and Residential Estates project. Looking on is Gen. Trias Mayor Osboy Campaña. Eagle Ridge is a joint-venture project between Sta. Lucia Realty and Alsons Land Corp., a subsidiary of Alsons Consolidated Resources.

CONSTRUCTSCOPE

Firm to relocate to Philamlife Tower

JOAQUIN Cunanan & Co., a member-firm of PricewaterhouseCoopers, recently signed a new lease for more than 3,500 sq. m of office space in the Philamlife Tower. Property services and management group FPDSavills Philippines assisted JC & Co. in the deal and is currently managing the fitout that covers almost two floors. Widely regarded as the most technically advanced office building in the country, it is home to many large corporations including Nokia, People Support, Sun Microsystems, Dow Jones, the Financial Times, Chase Manhattan Bank, Bank of America and FPDSavills.

Southeast Asia's biggest battery plant to open soon

ORIENTAL and Motolite Corp. will inaugurate during the first quarter of 2001 Philippine Batteries Inc., its new fully integrated battery plant, in a bid to accelerate its exports program and strengthen its leadership in the local battery market.

PBI, located in a 20-hectare lot in Sta. Maria, Bulacan, is the biggest and most modern automotive battery manufacturing plant in Southeast Asia. Featuring technologically advanced equipment in plate production, battery assembly and battery charging, it has a potential production capacity of 600,000 standard battery units per month.

PBI currently produces 200,000 battery units monthly, 60 percent of which is for domestic consumption with the balance exported to the United States and Australia. It produces both maintenance-free and dry charged batteries.

OMC is the first and only local battery company in the Philippines which produces maintenance-free batteries for the export market.

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More so, Crown Asia expresses their goal of eliminating the option of renting. The property developer offers a comparative analysis of renting against home buying. They can help you evaluate if you are financially as well as personally prepared to make the home-ownership investment.

Good investment

According to their in-house research, buying a home is a good investment. It is a financial venture that appreciates in value. One can even use this leverage as a solid capital.

What renters miss out from are the tax breaks of the real property. Mortgage interests and the property taxes are tax deductible—therefore saves you money each year.

Although the rent control law maybe deemed as renter-friendly, it doesn't protect them from rising prices. Condominiums, townhouses, apartments and the like are subject to increases like taxes, insurance and utilities just like homes. The main difference is that landlords can easily pass along to the tenants these increases.

For long-term residency, think twice—renting or investing on that house and lot that you can all your own. Don't defer while waiting for the prices to drop. Grab the chance to own a home through Crown Asia.

REAL ESTATE

CESAR D. MANGAWANG, Editor

CAPITOL GOLF VS FARMERS

Phivolcs says Macabud fit for crops, fruit trees

BY TESSA RELAMPAGOS SALAZAR

THE MACABUD farmers seem to have been vindicated from the earlier move of then Department of Agrarian Reform Secretary Horacio Morales declaring potential agricultural lands in Barangay Macabud to be outside Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program coverage.

During a Jan. 17 congressional hearing of the 144-hectare Macabud land case, Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) director Raymundo Punongbayan described the contested area as "very hilly" with "many tributaries that could deliver water to the site. He said this is "fit for high-value crops and fruit trees." He added, however, that the land "is not suitable for rice."

Asked by INQUIRER of its suitability as a golf course, Punongbayan said that "a lot of land leveling and modification of topography will have to be done. He warned that if these are not properly executed, it may result to an unstable soil condition, siltation, soil erosion and will affect areas downstream."

Rodriguez's municipal mayor Rafaelito San Diego and vice mayor Virginia Manuel, who were present during the preliminary hearing, stressed that the Municipality of Rodriguez objects Morales' order to exempt Macabud from CARP.

San Diego cited Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Rizal's resolution 98-197 opposing the planned conversion for the following reasons:

- Barangay Macabud is situated within the La Mesa Watershed and the Alat Diversion Dam area—as such it is the source of 86-million liters of water sustaining the daily needs of Metro Manila residents.
- The extensive use of pesticides and herbicides to maintain the golf course greeneries might adversely affect the water tables.
- Barangay Macabud is hilly, and developing it into a golf course might weaken ground stability, which may lead to soil erosion and landslides.
- Barangay Macabud is still considered a food basket of the municipality. Rootcrops and fruit-bearing trees are grown in its soil.

Macabud farmers earlier lashed out at Morales' Nov. 15, 2000 declaration favoring Capitol Hills Golf and Country Club. The contested Macabud area, according to Morales, is exempted from CARP coverage invoking Department of Justice Opinion 44 that says all areas classified as commercial, residential and industrial prior to the enactment of the CARP law are exempted from CARP coverage. Farmers argued that Macabud had not been earlier classified as residential, commercial and industrial because it was actually classified as a deferred land use zone. Thus DOJ Opinion 44 has no bearing on this issue according to farmers.

San Diego also said farmers relied much on the farmlands of Barangay Macabud, and there had been no alternative plans for the farmers should they be displaced to paye the way for the development of Macabud into a golf course.

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Farmers doubt ALI's claim of noninvolvement in Capitol Golf dev't

BY TESSA R. SALAZAR

FARMERS doubt Ayala Land Inc.'s claim that it is not involved in the acquisition by Capitol Hills Golf Country Club of parcels of land in Barangay Macabud, Rodriguez, Rizal.

In a Jan. 17, 2001 preliminary hearing attended by farmers and ALI and Capitol Golf representatives at Congress, Macabud farmers stressed that Ayala Land does have a participation in the "acquisition and development" of 124 hectares of Macabud into a 36-hole golf course. Farmer-leader Elvira Baladad revealed the findings of a reliable legal source that indicated that ALI had plunked in about P282 million (including interest incurred over time) for the Macabud Golf Course project. The money, farmers claim, had "already been partly used to harass the farmers of Macabud."

Dindo R. Fernando, ALI's manager for external affairs division, stressed during the hearing that ALI is not involved in the acquisition of the Macabud. He stressed that Baladad's statement is not accurate.

"*Baka po maging* impression *ng kagalang galang na* committee *na ito at ng mga kasama natin dito na bahagi ang* ALI *sa pagbibili ng mga lupa. Gaya ng naibida ko kanina, pinili po ng* Ayala *ang* frontline *ng* existing Capitol Golf course *at sapagkat binili po namin yon ay nagbayad po kami. Kung ano pong paraan na gagamitin ng* Capitol Hills *sa pagbili ng kanilang* properties *sa kahit ano man, wala na po kaming kinalaman.* (It might be misinterpreted by the committee and everybody present in the hearing that ALI is part of CHGCC's land acquisition. As I have mentioned, Ayala bought the frontline of the existing Capitol Golf course and because we bought it, we paid for it. Whatever CHGCC did to the money, we no longer have anything to do with it.)," said Fernando.

A position paper was signed by ALI's assistant vice president for external affairs division Roberto Chan and Fernando. The paper stated:

"While ALI has been granted by CHGCC the first option to cause the development of CHGCC's proposed 36-hole championship golf course pursuant to an agreement between the parties on May 19, 1997, ALI is not involved in the acquisition by CHGCC of parcels of land in Barangay Macabud, Rodriguez, Rizal, and is not in a position to address matters which may be requested by this committee pertaining to the facts and circumstances surrounding the acquisition."

It added that on matters concerning the acquisition by the CHGCC of parcels of land in Barangay Macabud, Rodriguez, Rizal, ALI recommended that the committee direct its queries to the management of the CHGCC.

CONSTRUCTSCOPE

Economic forecast up at realtors' meet

AN ANALYSIS of the country's economic and political outlook for the year will be featured during the National Real Estate Association's first business meeting today at 1:30 p.m. at Club Filipino, Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila. Architect Placido M. Calma, newly elected NREA national president, said the guest speaker is Peter Wallace, president of the Economic Intelligence Unit, a sister-company of the respected weekly magazine "The Economist." Wallace will brief participants on the economic and political forecast for the country. Wallace, who is well-respected in the local business community, regularly briefs the chief executive officers of multinational companies and senior government officials. He has provided political and economic analysis considered as a fair and balanced assessment of the country, Calma cited. Chaired by engineer Fernando M. Miranda Jr., NREA vice chair, the meeting will allow NREA members, including nonmember participants, to interact with Wallace in an open forum following his speech. This is the first of a series of business meetings of the NREA, which celebrates its 10th anniversary this year.

Workshop on loans for developers set

A WORKSHOP for subdivision developers and other real estate participants on the housing loan facilities of the Pag-Ibig Fund, Social Security System, Government Service Insurance System and Land Bank of the Philippines will be hosted by the Subdivision and Housing Developers Association on Jan. 26 at Prince Plaza Hotel, Legarda Road, Baguio City. SHDA national president Mariano D. Martinez Jr. said the workshop will brief participants on the available funding programs of said financial institutions for housing project proponents, including homebuyers. Among these programs are the P6-billion Pabahay program of the LBP; the GSIS' P6-billion fund allocated equally for project development loans and homebuyers' loans; Pag-Ibig's Direct Developmental Loan Program; and SSS' P3-billion direct housing facility for trade union members and overseas Filipino workers. Part of the SHDA's series of regional workshops, the activity is in pursuit of its advocacy of helping facilitate and enhance the private housing sector's access to various home financing facilities and enhance their participation in the government's shelter program.

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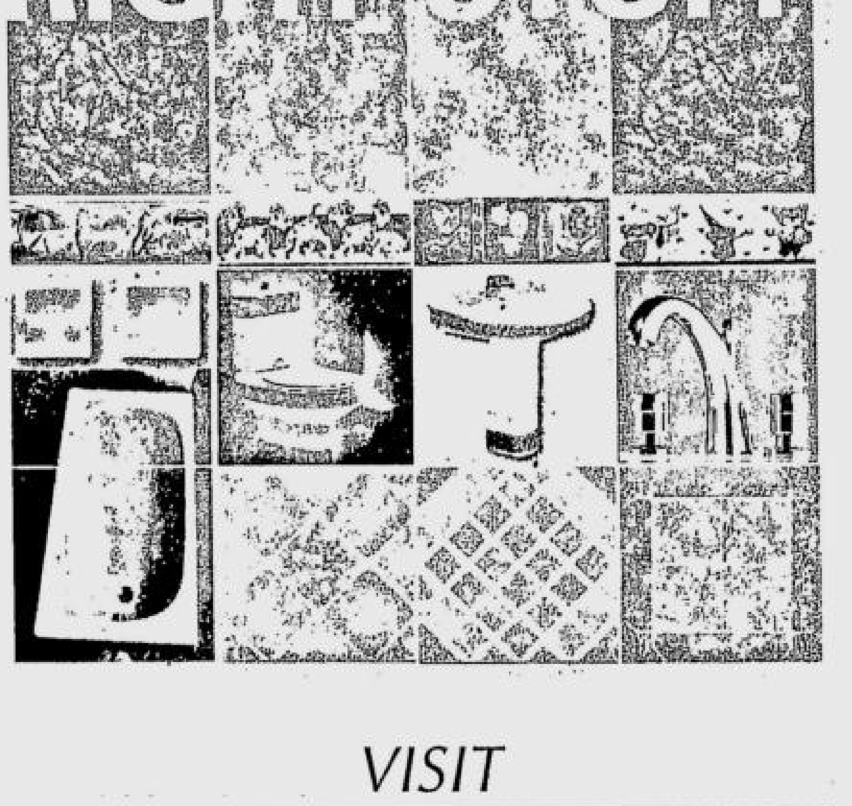

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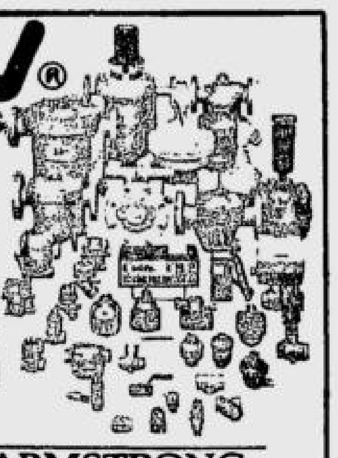

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CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor

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How to be a willing vegetarian

BY MARGE C. ENRIQUEZ

IF you've got diabetes, colon ailments or a herat problem and the doctor tells you to go vegetarian, would you suffer? Think of chucking chicken for mushroom or scrambled eggs for tofu, jumbled in oil, soy sauce and turmeric.

> Begin with the right attitude; if you do it only for medical reasons, chances are you won't last long

In caring for our bodies, we need to give importance to our diet.

It is common knowledge that vegetarianism has benefits ranging from lowering cholesterol levels, blood pressure and risk of cancer to increasing mental alertness and improved complexion.

From my observation, people turn to vegetarianism for three reasons: the moral aspect of killing and eating other animals and karmic implications, health problems and weight loss. People who meditate or follow spiritual disciplines will stick to the diet because they understand the effects of meat and fish on their minds and bodies. The diet becomes a part of their lifestyle.

Most people who don't believe in the moral aspect of the meatless diet are temporarily converted to it because of the doctor's orders or because they want to lose weight. Naturopath Dr. Ravi Singh of the Ra Kendra Wellness Center has handled clients who were forced to become vegetarians on doctor's orders. The center provides a nutrition counseling program, a supervised cleansing diet and auxiliary drugless therapies. The paradox is that once their health improves after their program, they will revert to their eating habits that caused them sickness in the first place.

To become a vegetarian, begin with the right attitude. "People like to impose limitations on themselves. Even if they can, they say they cannot," says Singh. The change must be borne out of a sincere desire. If you were forced only by medical reasons, chances are you won't last long.

Singh and his wife, Rashmi (née Girlie Tolentino), also a naturopath, underscore that because everyone is unique, the nutritional requirements will be different. Therefore, every diet should be individualized to fit one's needs.

"Following a prescription blindly can be the wrong approach. The best way is to educate yourself. Begin with what's prescribed and add what you like to eat," says Singh.

Misunderstood

The term vegetarianism is often misunderstood to mean either surviving only on vegetables or eschewing red meat and pork. A vegetarian abstains from eating foods of animal origin. In my case, many of my hosts have committed the faux pas of putting plates of chicken and seafood or noodles and soup with slivers of shrimp or meat. Immediately these dishes are sent back to the kitchen and replaced with fresh green salad or fruits.

Vegetarians eat from a variety of food groups. Many vegetarian books cite that a daily balanced diet consists of five or more servings of grains, three servings of vegetables, three servings of fruits and three servings of legumes. Nuts, seeds and dairy products provide protein.

The shift to a vegetarian diet should be gradual. Normally, people eschew the red meat and pork.

First, understand what meat does to your body. It's a common belief that we can't get all amino acids from vegetables. However, animals can't eat the minerals from the earth and combine them with air and water to build proteins. Plants have the power to synthesize amino acids.

"We are made to believe we need to eat so much protein. Look for a better alternative, animal protein is considered biologically superior to vegetable protein. The negative aspect of it is in all the toxins (e.g. additives and hormones) that come with it. Meat has 25 percent protein. The other 75 percent is what your body doesn't need and has to be worked on. Look for a source of protein that will give you the benefit but will not add the burden to your body," explains Singh.

Dairy products are excellent sources of protein. "The downside is the mucus production. If you are asthmatic, try to stay away from it. But in India, naturopaths put asthmatics on a raw milk diet. They take it the whole day. They do it for 21-40 days," says Singh.

The best substitutes for animal protein are sprouts such as mung, alfalfa and radish which contain enzymes and fibers. Ditto with soya milk and tofu as long as it has not been processed.

Singh doesn't recommend meat substitutes such as gluten or vegemeat not only because of the processing and low nutritive value. It's one way of fooling the tastebuds into thinking that it's meat.

"The best way to start is to eat fresh green salads. Fresh vegetables have a life force. That *chi* contributes to your well-being if you eat them fresh. If you process them too much you lose their *chi*," he says.

Flavor them with such dressings as sesame butter, vinaigrette and yogurt. Try mung sprouts, cooked in sesame oil and made crunchy with chopped celery and sesame seeds.

For the main meal, steam or bake vegetables and top them with cheese sauce.

"You don't have to go far. See what you're eating and substitute. When you have done that, you can do more. Take one step at a time," says Singh.

Substitutes

For breakfast if you've been used to fried rice, eggs and *tocino* or bacon, Singh recommends congee (preferably cooked in vegetable stock). If you're looking for something salty, take preserved

HOW/ p.C3

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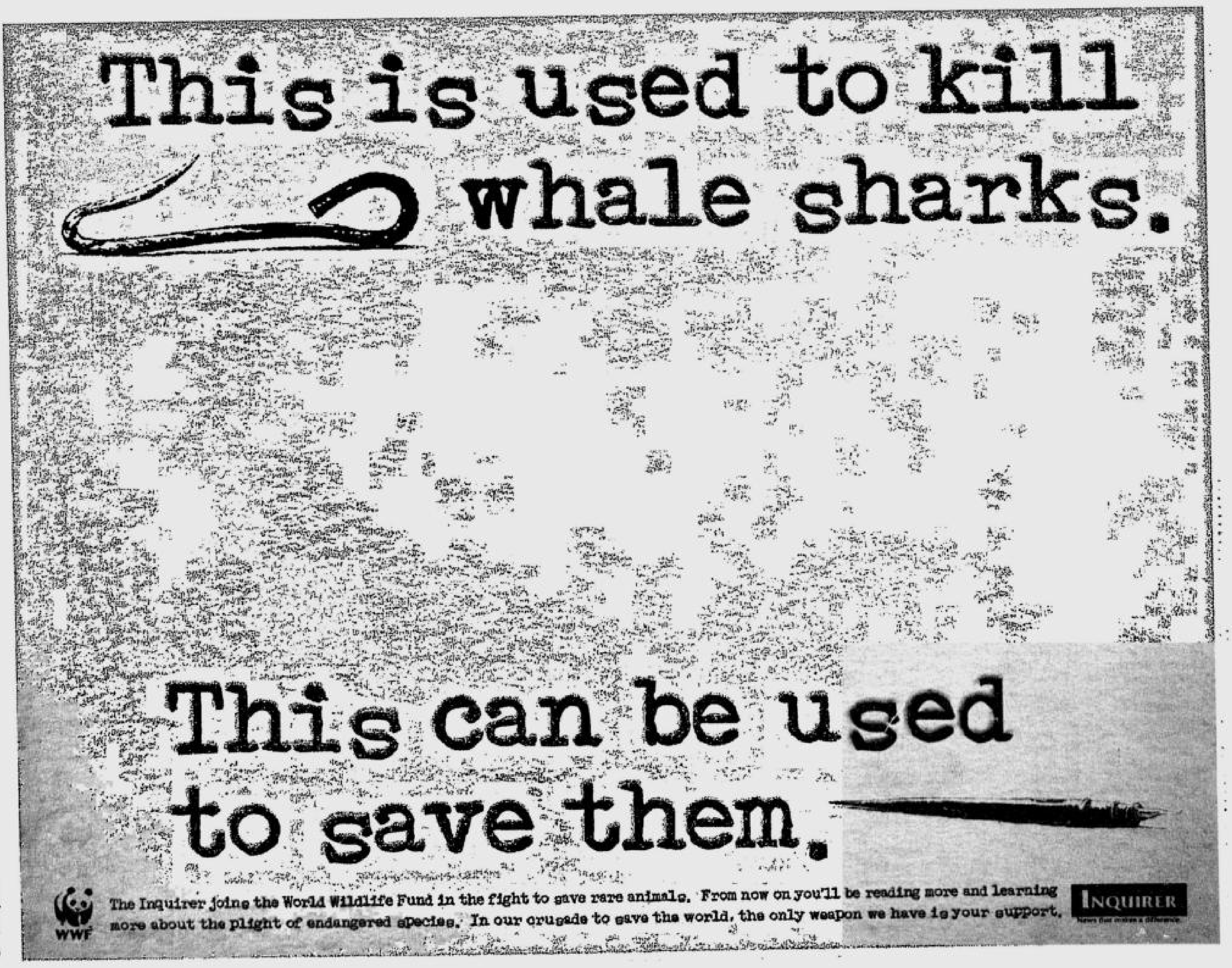
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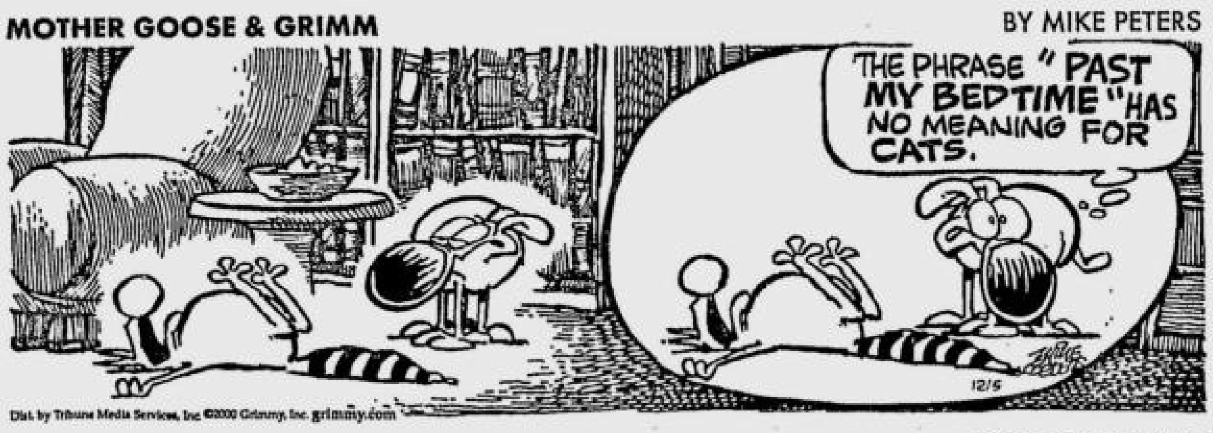
BY MIKE PETERS


THE PHRASE "PAST MY BEDTIME" HAS NO MEANING FOR CATS.
12/5

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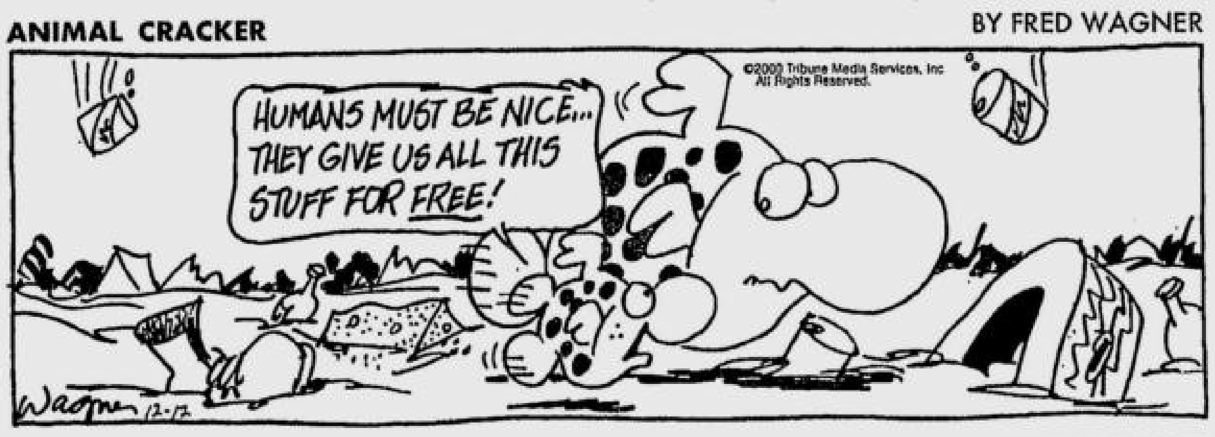
ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


HUMANS MUST BE NICE... THEY GIVE US ALL THIS STUFF FOR FREE!
Wagner 12-12

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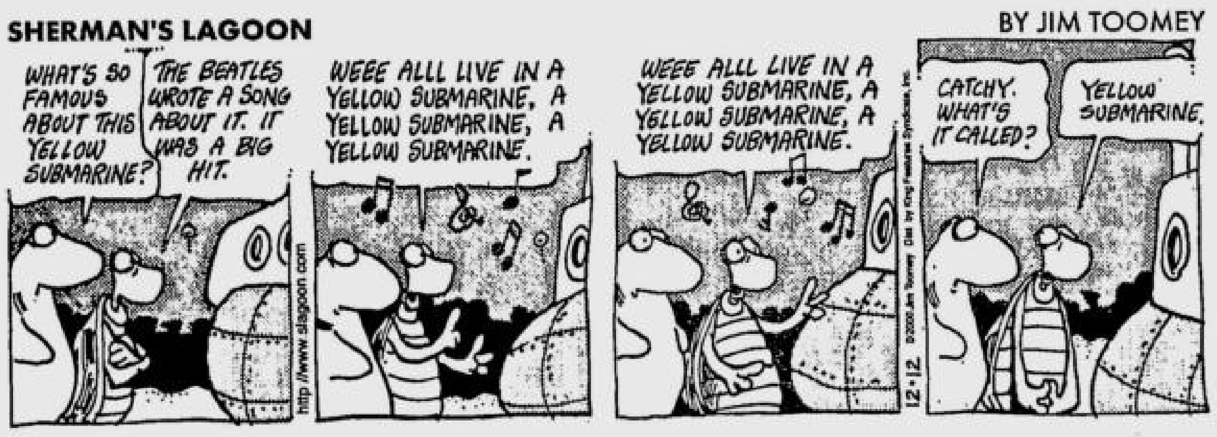
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


WHAT'S SO FAMOUS ABOUT THIS YELLOW SUBMARINE?
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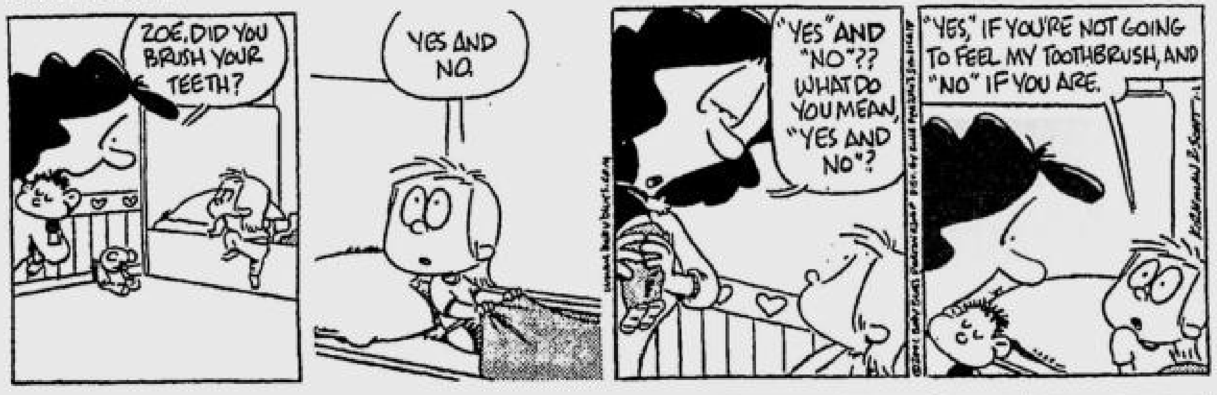
12-12

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


ZOE, DID YOU BRUSH YOUR TEETH?
YES AND NO.
"YES" AND "NO"?? WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "YES AND NO"?
"YES," IF YOU'RE NOT GOING TO FEEL MY TOOTHBRUSH, AND "NO" IF YOU ARE.

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jeanne Moreau, Princess Caroline, Rutger Hauer, Richard D. Anderson, Geoff Wigdor, Tiffani-Amber Thiessen, Earl Falconer

Happy Birthday: It's time to turn things around by making the necessary changes. You've been on the fence for too long, so make your move. You'll need to be versatile if you want to get ahead. The more adaptable you are, the better. Keep your comments to yourself and work hard to ensure that you reach your goals. Your numbers: 9, 12, 16, 22, 25, 37

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Domestic purchases will be profitable today. You should be looking into real estate buys or a residential move. Listen to your friends. Their advice will be quite valuable.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Don't overreact or allow your temper to explode. Work quietly behind the scenes, paying special attention to detail. Your lover may take drastic measures to get your attention.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You should not give to organizations today. You are likely to donate too much or give too much of your time. Investments will not be as profitable as they appear. Take a closer look.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You can help children with their problems. Financial investments pertinent to your home will be lucrative. Be careful when signing contracts or formulating agreements.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You will get into arguments with friends or relatives today. Try hard not to instigate unnecessary friction with loved ones. Your own irritability will be largely at fault. Avoid travel if possible.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): If you bend over backward to help friends in need, you will enhance your reputation. Your ability to look at situations logically will allow you to make constructive suggestions.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Visitors may drop by, resulting in friction between you and your mate. Try hard to keep your calm, or the silent treatment will be sure to follow. Don't take on too many projects.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't spend too much on travel or friends. Opportunities to meet new and exciting individuals will develop through educational pursuits. Sign up for lectures or courses.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Unexpected visitors will be a welcome sight. You can make favorable changes in your domestic scene. Take care of all those chores that have been building up.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Instant romance will not be lasting. Take precautions if you wish to spare your heart. Your concern for older family members and those who need help will enhance your reputation.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You should spend time with those who can help lift your depression. You need intellectual interaction. Don't let employers interfere with your plans. They may try to take credit for your efforts.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Concentrate on your hobbies. Don't let anyone take advantage of your generosity. You will experience financial loss if you are careless with your wallet or your investments.

Birthday Baby: You take the lead and stay there. You're quick to evaluate and to make your move. Your strong vision of the way things are supposed to be gives you confidence in yourself.

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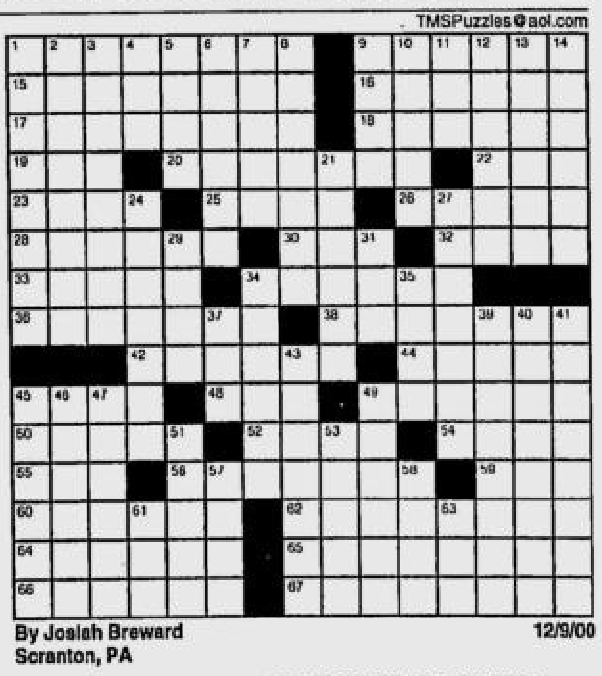
9 Away from the bow
15 Bernhardt's rival Duse
16 After-dinner party
17 Of a stance
18 Medicates
19 Make a choice
20 Makeshift baseball field
22 Solidify
23 Actress Garr
25 Add to staff
26 Get a noseful
28 Cake toppings
30 Klutz
32 Out of work
33 Burn ends of
34 Blacksmiths' blocks
36 Vivid purplish red
38 Libido
42 Begins
44 Painted pony
45 Three-hand card game
48 Montana or Louis
49 "__ and Howard"
50 Intrinsically
52 Infamous fiddler
54 Puppy barks
55 Objective
56 First of "The Alexandria Quartet"
59 Suitable
60 Verbalizer
62 Possible to avoid
64 First family of Florence
65 Backpedaler of a sort
66 Biases
67 Lionel and others

DOWN
1 Favoritism for family
2 Loss-of-hair condition
3 Fix a tennis racket, e.g.
4 Foldaway bed
5 Millstone
6 Synagogue scrolls
7 Teheran resident
8 Vat for boiling
9 Regarding
10 Alphabetizes
11 Even score
12 Expunged
13 Pass gossip
14 Get cozy
21 Takes off
24 Eats
27 As if in a fog
29 Fella
31 Evergreen
34 Copland and Spelling
35 Easy gait
37 __ Mahal
39 Unable to develop normally
40 Pointillist
41 McKellen film, "Gods and __"
43 Balances on the brink
45 Involuntary contractions
46 "The Piano" co-star Harvey
47 Fleet afloat
49 Dickens or Seles
51 Deplane in a flash
53 Metal bolt
57 "Mila 18" author
58 Style of school jacket
61 Can metal
63 Assistance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By Josiah Breward
Scranton, PA

12/9/00

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

A	D	L	I	B		A	P	S	E		A	C	H	E
D	I	A	N	E		G	U	A	M		L	O	U	D
O	N	W	A	R	D	A	N	D	U	P	W	A	R	D
B	E	N		A	O	R	T	A		L	A	X	L	Y
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			I	L	K	S			U	S	A	G	E	S
P	H	O	T	O		H	E	I	S	T		A	L	A
H	I	G	H	W	A	Y	T	O	H	E	A	V	E	N
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L	E	E	R		E	R	A	S		M	A	N	T	A

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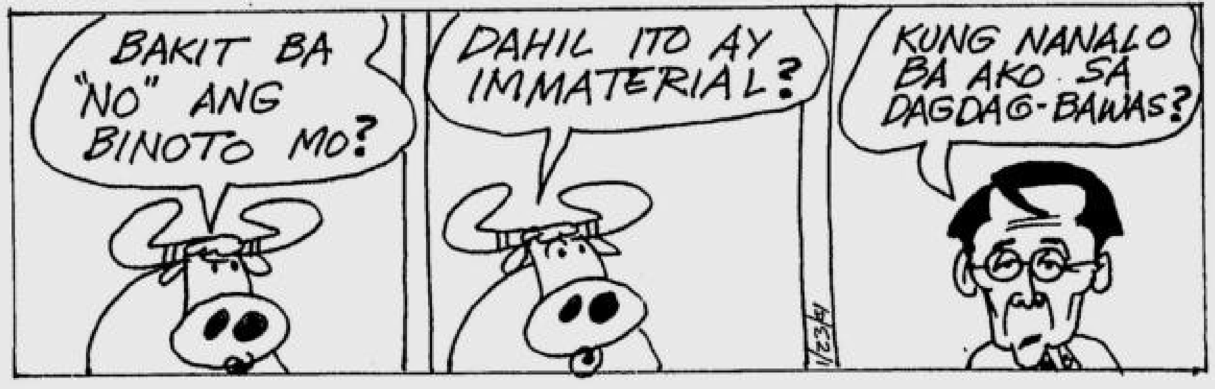
12/9/00

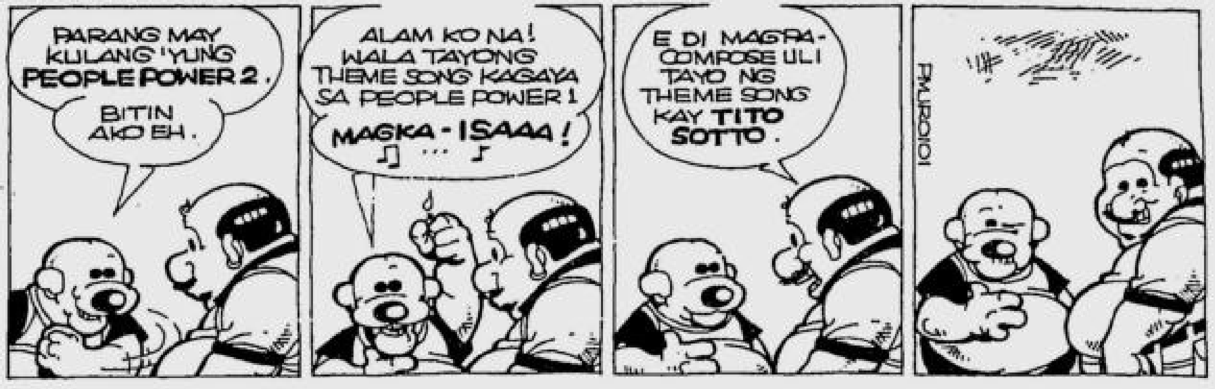
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


BAKIT BA "NO" ANG BINOTO MO?
DAHIL ITO AY IMMATERIAL?
KUNG NANALO BA AKO SA DAGDAG-BAWAS?
1/23/01

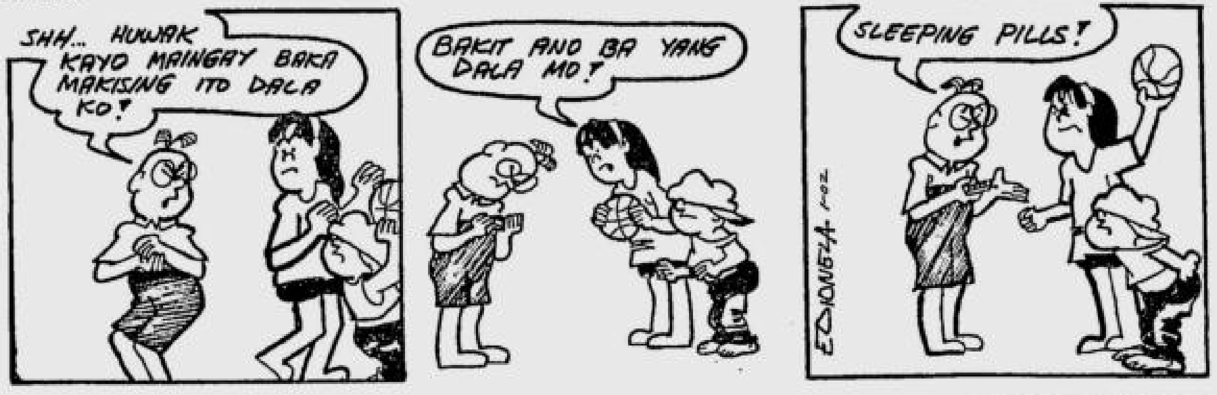
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


PARANG MAY KULANG 'YUNG PEOPLE POWER 2.
BITIN AKO EH.
ALAM KO NA! WALA TAYONG THEME SONG KAGAYA SA PEOPLE POWER 1
MAGKA-ISAAA! ♫ ... ♪
E DI MAG-RE-COMPOSE ULI TAYO NG THEME SONG KAY TITO SOTTO.
PMJR0101

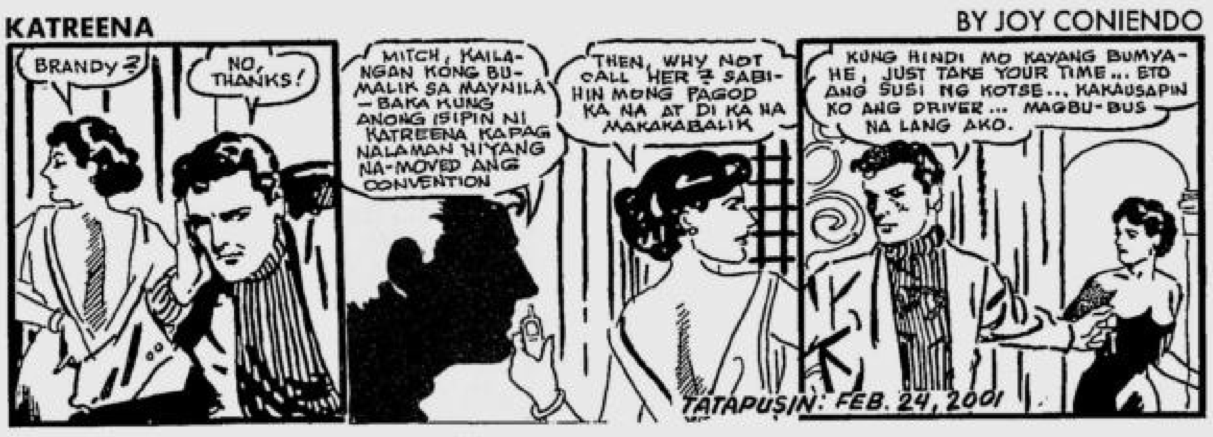
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


SHH... HUWAK KAYO MAINGAY BAKA MAKISING ITO DALA KO!
BAKIT ANO BA YANG DALA MO?
SLEEPING PILLS!
EDIONELA

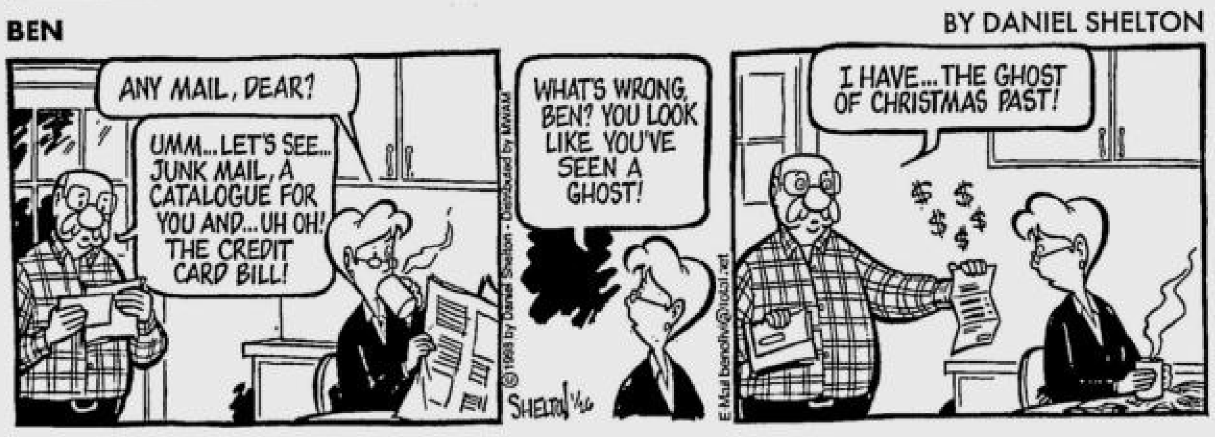
KATREENA

BY JOY CONIENDO


BRANDY?
NO, THANKS!
MITCH, KAILANGAN KONG BUMALIK SA MAYNILA — BAKA KUNG ANONG ISIPIN NI KATREENA KAPAG NALAMAN NIYANG NA-MOVED ANG CONVENTION
THEN, WHY NOT CALL HER? SABIHIN MONG PAGOD KA NA AT DI KA NA MAKAKABALIK
KUNG HINDI MO KAYANG BUMYAHE, JUST TAKE YOUR TIME... ETO ANG SUSI NG KOTSE... KAKAUSAPIN KO ANG DRIVER... MAGBU-BUS NA LANG AKO.
TATAPUSIN: FEB. 24, 2001

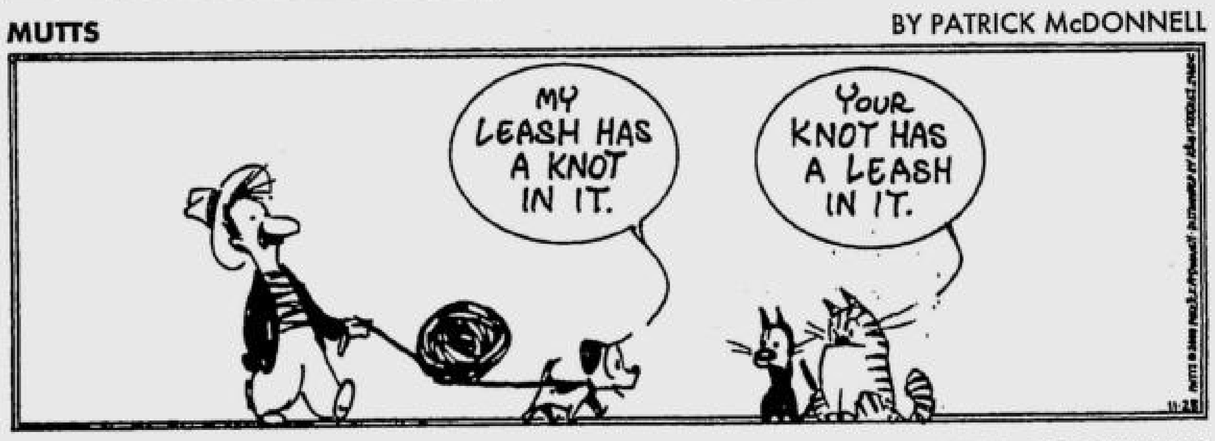
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


ANY MAIL, DEAR?
UMM...LET'S SEE... JUNK MAIL, A CATALOGUE FOR YOU AND...UH OH! THE CREDIT CARD BILL!
WHAT'S WRONG, BEN? YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'VE SEEN A GHOST!
I HAVE...THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST!
SHELTON

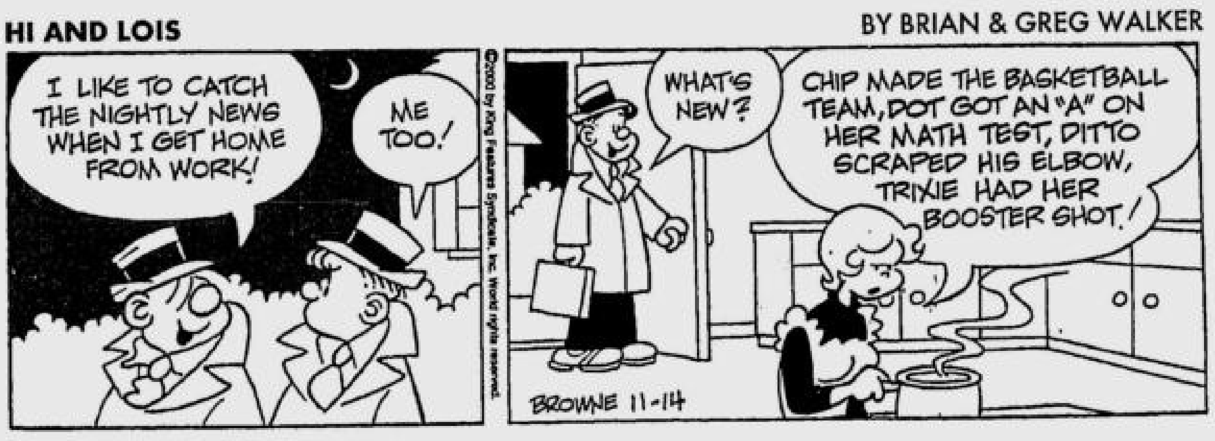
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


MY LEASH HAS A KNOT IN IT.
YOUR KNOT HAS A LEASH IN IT.
11-28

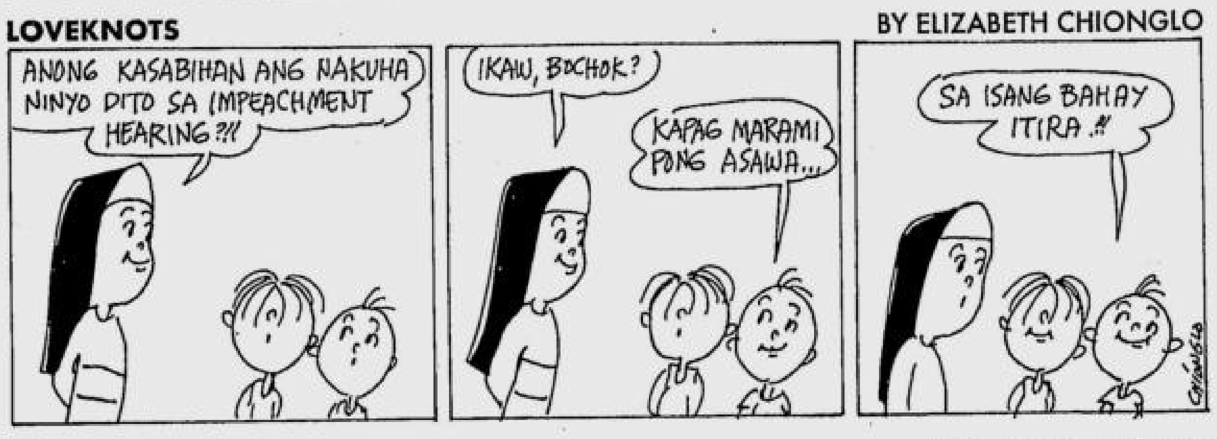
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


I LIKE TO CATCH THE NIGHTLY NEWS WHEN I GET HOME FROM WORK!
ME TOO!
WHAT'S NEW?
CHIP MADE THE BASKETBALL TEAM, DOT GOT AN "A" ON HER MATH TEST, DITTO SCRAPED HIS ELBOW, TRIXIE HAD HER BOOSTER SHOT!
BROWNE 11-14

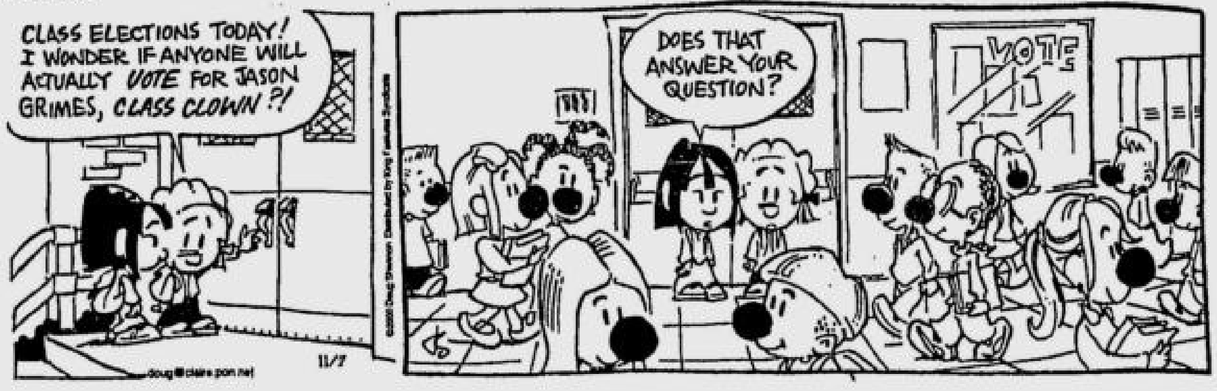
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ANONG KASABIHAN ANG NAKUHA NINYO DITO SA IMPEACHMENT HEARING?!!
IKAW, BOCHOK?
KAPAG MARAMI PONG ASAWA...
SA ISANG BAHAY ITIRA!!
CHIONGLO

CLAIRE

BY DOUG SHANNON


CLASS ELECTIONS TODAY! I WONDER IF ANYONE WILL ACTUALLY VOTE FOR JASON GRIMES, CLASS CLOWN?!
DOES THAT ANSWER YOUR QUESTION?
VOTE
doug@claire.pon.net
11/7

What makes a place sacred?

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

WHAT makes a particular site sacred or holy? Is the sacredness of a place inherent in it, or merely conferred to it by others? Does the fact that a place is considered sacred by a number of people make it so?

These are questions that buzz in my mind as I survey the various sites considered sacred by people from different parts of the world.

Let us begin with examples to be found in our own country. Mt. Banahaw in Dolores, Quezon comes to mind immediately. Many spiritual groups and mystics consider the mountain sacred. They have identified over a hundred specific places in Mt. Banahaw, called *puestos*, to be sacred and should be respected and even venerated. They consider the entire mountain to be the New Jerusalem.

But before the legendary Agripino Lontok, the first mystic of Mt. Banahaw, was mysteriously told about the sanctity of the place, and before he even set foot on the mountain, was Mt. Banahaw already sacred? If not, why?

Does the fact that somebody pronounces a place to be sacred make it so? Let us consider other places as we try to find an answer to this question.

The River Ganges is considered sacred by the Hindus, who believed that bathing there removes one's sins and breaks the cycle of birth and rebirth. Bethlehem is considered sacred by the Christians because it is believed to be the birthplace of Jesus Christ whom they consider their Messiah or Savior. The Bodhi tree is considered sacred by the Buddhists because it was under that tree that Buddha sat for a long time and received enlightenment.

Ayer's Rock (originally called Uluru) in Australia is considered sacred by the Australian aborigines because it is a place where spirits dwell. Lourdes in France is considered sacred by the Catholics because it is where many miraculous cures have taken place. Mt. Olympus in ancient Greece was considered sacred because that was where the gods dwelt.

Joshua Tree National Park located northeast of Los Angeles was considered sacred by the American Indians, so are certain parts of Sedona, Arizona. Is it because they were sites of religious worship and ceremony or because they are high-energy centers?

Archaeologists discovered that in places where a great and important religious cathedral or temple presently stands, another cathedral or temple of previous generations unknown to the latter people also stood. It is as if there is some unknown marker or beacon that makes a group of people choose the exact spot where to build their temple or cathedral. Is it because they instinctively know where the greatest energy is coming from? Or could this knowledge be part of what psychologist Carl Jung calls mankind's collective unconscious?

For a spot or site to be considered sacred, is it necessary or important that miracles must have taken place there just like in Lourdes, Mt. Banahaw, the River Ganges? Or is it enough that they be acknowledged or considered sacred by a group of people?

How come neither the Pyramids at Giza in Egypt, nor Stonehenge in England, nor the giant stone statues in Easter Island are considered sacred? Is it because there have been no great miracles reported to have taken place there?

Why then is present-day Bethlehem considered sacred by the Christians, although it is not really certain that Christ was born in that specific place? In fact, another site also in Israel is considered the real birthplace of Christ. So which one is really sacred? Both or neither?

To the devoted followers or disciples of the Philippine National Hero Jose P. Rizal, the place where he was shot and died in Luneta is considered sacred. Why not the tarmac of NAIA where another modern-day hero, Ninoy Aquino, was gunned down in cold blood?

What then makes a place sacred? By mere consensus of a certain number of people or because there is something inherently magical, or supernatural or paranormal about a place?

I believe the answer to be both. For no amount of consensus can make an ordinary site to be extraordinary if there is nothing inherently magical or miraculous about the place.

A place becomes sacred by virtue of the inherent magic or energy of the place as well as the consensus of a good number of people lasting for generations that consider it to be so.

Write to Room 308 Prince Plaza I, 106 Legaspi St., Greenbelt, Makati City or.e-mail jlicauco @geocities.com. Visit www.angel fire.com/journal/licauco. Listen to my dzMM radio program every Sunday, 6-8 p.m.

Headaches linked food

BY CONSTANTINO C. TEJERO

BRIGHT lights hurt the eyes. There are illusions of flashes, transient defects in speech and body movement, and a loss of vision. And then, pounding at one's temples, the severe, throbbing pain begins.

Headache is the most common bodily complaint known to man. Like the common cold, it is a quite ordinary thing with a mysterious origin.

A more commonplace but often overlooked fact is the observable link of food and headache. To establish this link, for instance, the Department of Neurology of Charing Cross Hospital in London studied 60 migraine patients and found out that the most common food causing the headache was wheat.

The food link

From the Web comes this information: "We view migraine as a fascinating example of food-reactive problems that allow us to examine the link between food ingestion, the circulating immune system and brain disturbances. Migraine sufferers are likely to respond well to adequate diet revision. It is usually not adequate just to eliminate a few things from the diet.

"Many migraine sufferers can identify single foods as headache triggers. Coffee, chocolate, junk foods, alcoholic beverages are common triggers, but normal food components—milk, wheat, barley, rye, oat, corn, egg, peanut, soy, almond, cashew, oranges, fish—can be headache triggers."

Adds another article: "Foods such as chocolate, anything pickled, nuts, sourdough, banana, pizza, sausage or bologna are among several foods that often trigger migraine. Excess amount of coffee, tea or caffeine soda may also trigger migraine."

It is certain chemical contents or components in those foods that cause the blood vessels to dilate or distend, which triggers the headache, says Dr. Rina Macalintal, a neurologist at the Makati Medical Center. Although this theory is still inconclusive, she says it is "the most accepted at this point."

Macalintal clarifies, however, that "not all headache precipitants are the same for each individual." Some people are more sensitive to certain foods than others, so that one may get a headache from sipping a spoonful of coffee while another feels exhilarated after gulping cups and cups of it.

The consumers

The Asian Food Information Center sent us a sheet from The Journal of the American Medical Association containing lists and tables of dietary triggers of migraine. These include: alcohol (especially red wine); foods with monosodium glutamate; foods with tyramine (aged cheeses); preserved meats with nitrate and nitrites.

Among the foods containing MSG are: accent seasoning, bacon bits, baking mixture, bouillon cube, bread stuffing, breaded food, canned meat, cheese dip, clam chowder, corn chips, croutons, dry roasted peanuts, frozen dinner, frozen pizza, gelatin, Oriental foods, potato chips, pot pie, processed meat, relishes, salad dressing, salt substitutes, seasonings, soup, soy sauce.

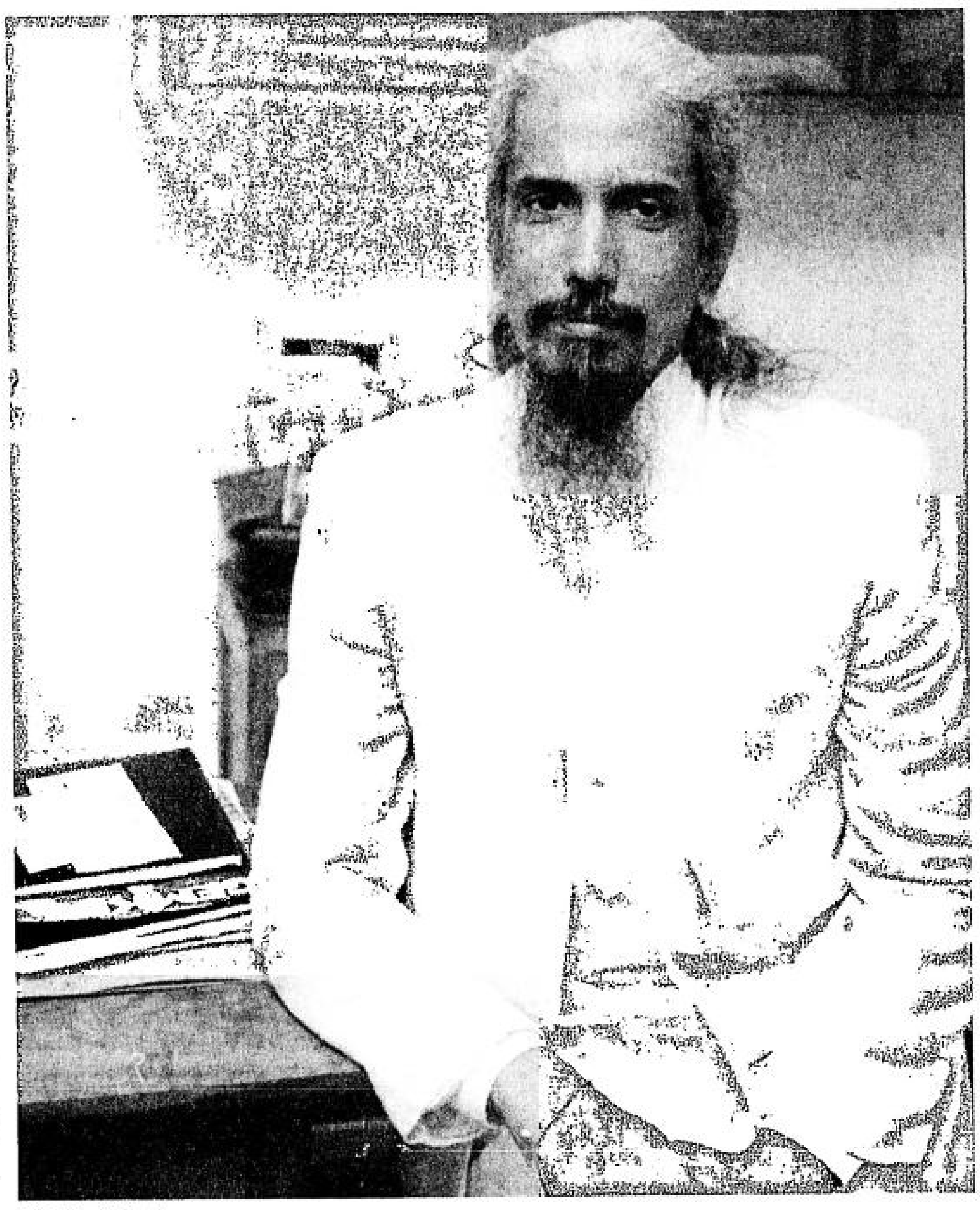
Those containing nitrates are: bacon, bratwurst, beef jerky, corn dog, corned beef, ham, hotdog, lunch meat, liverwurst, pastrami, pork and beans, salami, sausage, smoked fish, Spam, turkey lunch meat.

Macalintal confirms that among Filipinos, the most common headache trigger from their foods is MSG, followed by nitrate. Of native foods, the most common headache-inducer is *tocino*. Macalintal also mentions peanuts (fried or roasted, with a lot of MSG).

Logical enough, since the above are foods usually consumed in huge quantities by a highly civilized, educated, urban population—and, yes, most of these comestibles can hardly be afforded by manual laborers.

So it's not true at all that the working class, the poor, the illiterate, the rural folk, have bigger headaches.

How to be a willing vegetarian



DR. Ravi Singh

(From page C1)

beancurd, miso and soya grits. Cook *kesong puti* in butter in a pan, and mix it in rice. That's your substitute for eggs and rice.

Vegetarian meals are easy to prepare. You can make *adobong kangkong* by steaming the leaves and sautéeing them in ginger, tomatoes and black beans. For *adobong* mushrooms, simmer them in ginger, oil, vinegar, soy sauce and pepper.

If you're taking a packed lunch, bring slices of whole-wheat bread, pack the pickles, sprouts and cheese separately and make them into a sandwich. You can also pack fried *lumpia*, made with fresh tofu, sweet potato, cabbage, string beans, bean sprouts and *kinchay*.

For dinner, eat light. Make your own soup with mixed vegetables flavored with ginger, tomatoes and soy sauce. Miso soup is nutritious with *pechay*, *mustasa*, tomatoes and *gabi*. Vegetarian *pinakbet* is made from chopped squash, eggplant, okra, *ampalaya* and tomatoes.

Before sleeping, drink tea to calm the nerves and to aid digestion.

"If there's nothing to eat, you won't die if you don't eat that meal. You will die because of the poison from what you are eating. For me, not eating one meal is better than eating a bad meal. If you are hungry, take a glass of water," says the naturopath.

Detoxify

Asked why people find vegetarian food bland, Singh replies, "That's because they don't know how to prepare it. That is a culinary problem, not the problem of vegetables."

Most people don't know how to chew and masticate the food in their mouths where the digestive system begins. If people learn to eat slowly, they will re-educate their tastebuds.

"When you're eating meat, you don't know what it tastes like. You're savoring the sauce. If you continue to chew properly, what do you get? Tasteless rubber. We are not consuming food correctly. Vegetables have their own distinct tastes. If you know how to eat them, you will love them. They have their own sweetness," he says.

"With food, you have to consider that it has to be good for the body. You must also like it and take it in limited quantities. Many times people eat because they want to, not because they need to. It's an emotional, not a physical, need. You must be a conscious eater," he says.

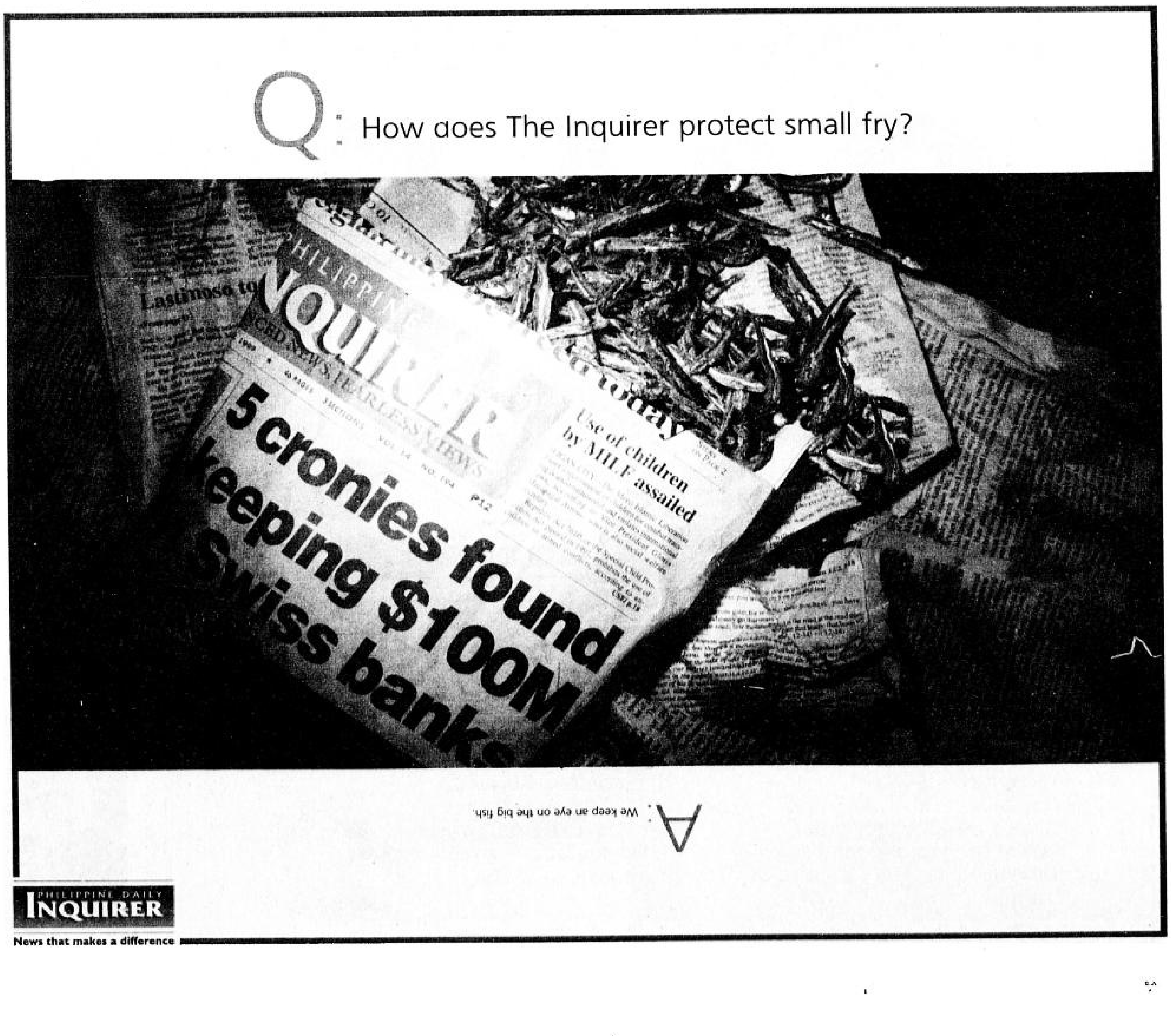
"Always consult a doctor. I've seen people follow blindly [a published diet] and end up fainting or having all kinds of complaints. They end up blaming the food. It's the not the fault of the food."

When Singh puts his clients on a nutrition management program, they are given supporting therapies so that they can cope with dizziness, headaches, nausea or withdrawal symptoms.

"Our physiotherapy helps you to detoxify. That's how you can get out of the cleansing program with a good feeling than with a trauma," says Singh.

"To stick to the diet needs conviction. You will see many religious converts if at one point they decide to quit, they make a turnaround. Find out what your body and emotions are trying to say. If your choice is vegetarianism, you will stick to it because you've seen the difference," he says.

Call Ra Kendra Center of Wholistic Wellness and Studies at 843-6142 and 893-0157. Or visit its offices at G-1C Gallery Building, Amorsolo St., Legaspi Village, Makati City. Visit www.rakendra.com



Q: How does The Inquirer protect small fry?
5 cronies found keeping $100M Swiss banks
Use of children by MILF assailed
A: We keep an eye on the big fish.
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
News that makes a difference

Keeping fit in times of crisis

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Aboitiz Juan

PEOPLE are already saying that Edsa 2 was successful in part because of high-tech inventions like the cell phone and the Internet. People used the power of the thumb! Joseph Estrada is, literally, the first president to be ousted by the text brigade. However, looking at it from a fitness point of view, it also struck me that people still had to use their bodies to make "people power" work.

Even if every single Filipino was sending text messages every minute of the day demanding for Erap to step down, it cannot compare to seeing thousands of people gathered in one place demonstrating their right to make their voices heard in a peaceful manner.

Rallies and demonstrations can be physically taxing even if you are in good shape, how much more if you have allowed your body to "deteriorate" over the years? You normally have to walk a great distance because of the crowds. You may have to stand for hours listening to the protest speeches. If you are carrying a placard or streamer, it can start to feel like a boulder on your shoulders after a few hours. Heck, even just sitting for hours during that farce of a Senate impeachment hearing required some physical endurance. Ask the people who were there daily. It's a good thing it was all over in a few days. Imagine if this crisis dragged on for a few weeks. Even if you are all set to do your part for "God and country," your body may not take it. You can end up with a scenario of "the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak."

No wonder I heard a TV reporter estimate that 90 percent of the Edsa crowd was below 30. Only the young can take the rigors of People Power Pinoy-style. That's why I was very impressed when former President Fidel Ramos walked from the Naia airport to the Edsa Shrine with obvious ease in spite of his age. It's clear that Ramos has kept himself in fighting form all these years—the exact opposite of you-know-who.

It was an example of what I have always believed—that keeping yourself fit pays off one day when you need your body to "perform" for you. And I don't mean perform in the sense of showmanship to please a crowd. I mean perform in the sense of using your body to achieve a goal like ousting a corrupt and incompetent leader.

Health is wealth

Even the media needs to be fit in order to deliver the news effectively. I could hear the heavy breathing of the reporters and cameramen as they rushed to and from the Presidential Residence the day Estrada left Malacañang. I also saw how they had to jostle each other for a good camera angle. All this takes physical strength and stamina.

So if you have been diligently exercising, congratulations. Doesn't it feel good to know you can take whatever physical hardships life will throw your way? One day, if you ever have to jump out of a burning airplane, swim away from a sinking ship or crawl your way out of a collapsed building, your strong body just might save your life. Should you ever catch a nasty virus or be involved in a car accident, being fit could be the determining factor between healing quickly and a lingering recovery.

Not that many of us will ever have occasion to be in such dramatic situations, but you never know what life will bring you. A friend told me she realized how important it was to be fit when she had to push branches and other heavy debris out of her way as she waded through chest-high flood waters last year. She never in her wildest dreams thought she would find herself in that predicament. She could have easily become another flood statistic, but luckily she had developed some physical strength a few months before her crisis. Health is the real wealth. Something that seems to have escaped the attention of the former occupant of the Palace who was never known to be role model for health and fitness.

The true value of exercising regularly is not so much in having firm triceps (I did see quite a lot of underarms flapping away as people shook their fists in the air) or a flat stomach, but in being able to handle physical stress during a time of crisis. Being fit gives you the confidence that you can take care of yourself physically if the need arises.

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Position of primal energy

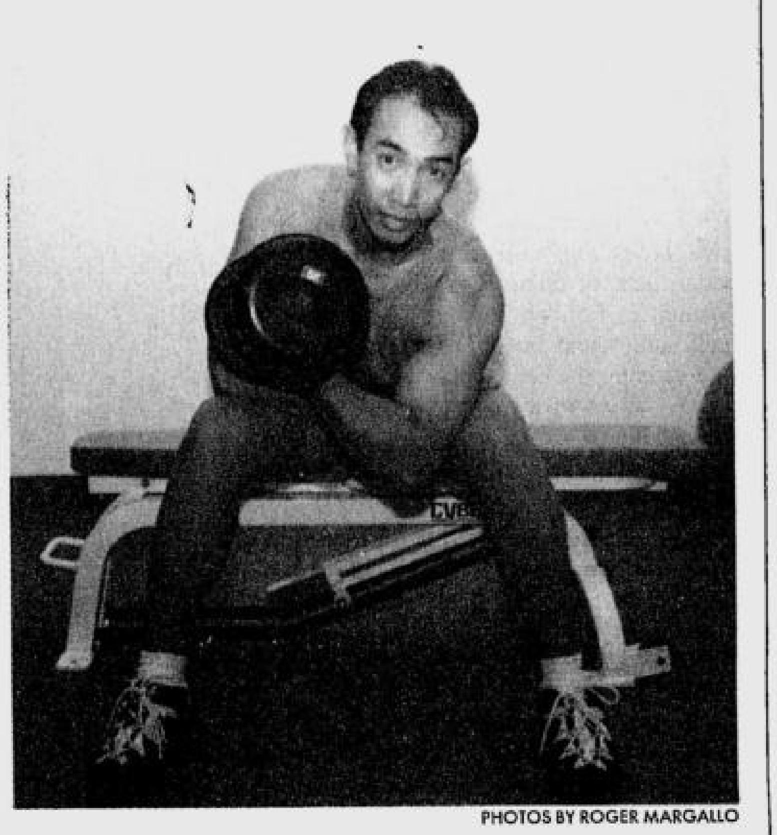
Though Edsa 2 is over, who knows when we will need to go out in the streets again for Edsa 3? A friend jokingly said that if we don't learn our lesson and punish the guilty, our children's children will be attending Edsa 10. So here is a technique you can use the next time you are surrounded by a crowd so thick there is no room to sit and you have to stand for hours. After all, nothing can dampen a patriotic spirit faster than a pain in the neck or lower back.

My sister-in-law tried this last week and she swears it works. I know it does because I use it if I have to stand for a long time in line at a bank or the airport. The technique is called the "*wu chi*" or position of "primal energy." Here is the way it is described in the book, "Tai Chi: The Natural Way to Strength and Health" by Master Lam Kam Chuen.

- Stand with your feet facing forward, shoulder-width apart. Be certain that your toes are pointing directly ahead and not outward at an angle. Let your hands hang loosely by your sides and relax your shoulders. Your gaze should be straight ahead. Imagine that your head is lightly suspended from a fine thread.
- Relaxation of your shoulders is essential. They have a tendency to rise unnoticed, drawing energy upward in the body, causing tension and headaches. Devote care to relaxing them as you stand.
- Slowly bend both knees so that you lower yourself by about 2 inches. Be careful to ensure your weight is evenly distributed over both feet and that it is centered in the middle of the soles of your feet. Check that your knees are not bent forward beyond your toes and that your upper body is still upright and relaxed. Your lower back should feel as if it is sinking downward. To avoid sticking your backside out, tuck the bottom of your spine slightly in. Breathe calmly and naturally.

Visit my website (www.tinajuanfitness.com) for past articles or exercises

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK



PHOTOS BY ROGER MARGALLO

Concentration biceps curl

This exercise focuses on the biceps, the muscles in the front of the upper arm.

Equipment:
Bench or stool
Dumbbells

Exercise technique:

1. Sit at the edge of a bench or stool with your legs separated, knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Hold a dumbbell in your right hand.
2. Lean forward from the hip and place your right arm above the elbow against the inner thigh.
3. Brace yourself by holding your left thigh with your left hand.
4. Curl the dumbbell by tightening and contracting your bicep.
5. Slowly lower the dumbbell and repeat until you finish the desired number of repetitions.
6. Repeat on the other hand.

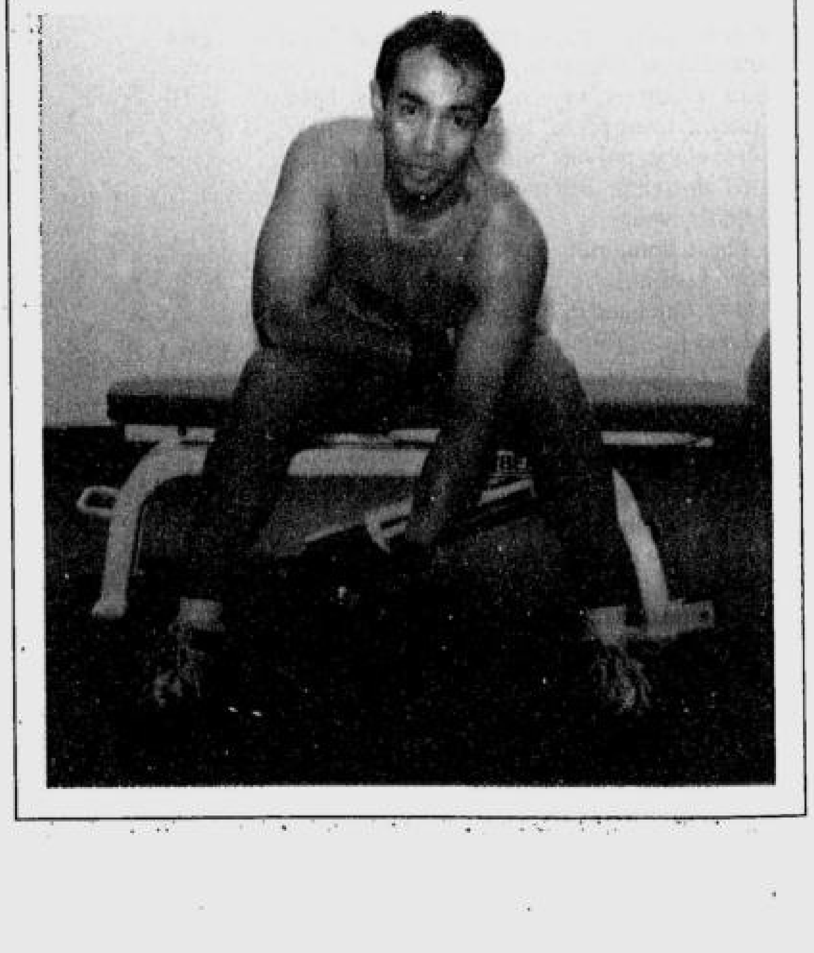
Performance tips:

1. Lean forward from the hip. Avoid rounding your back.
2. Your legs should be separated far enough that you have freedom of movement with the dumbbell.
3. Avoid bending your wrist as you curl the dumbbell.
4. Perform the exercise slowly. Avoid using momentum to swing the dumbbell up and down.
5. Keep your shoulders and trunk steady as you perform the curls.

Repetitions:

If you want larger biceps, use a weight that will fatigue your muscles in eight to 12 repetitions. Do one to three sets.

If you want toned biceps but do not want to increase the muscle size, use a weight that will fatigue your muscles in 15-20 repetitions. Do one to three sets.



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